

A woman with dark hair in a braid, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a dark plaid jacket over a dark top. She is resting her chin on her right hand and looking thoughtfully towards the camera. The background is dark and textured.

Anne

by Paul Ledoux

PS
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A84
1999

based on the novel
Anne of Green Gables
by L.M. Montgomery



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adapted from the novel

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To Ferne Downey
the best of all bosom friends



Paul Ledoux was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He began writing for the theatre in Montreal where his play, "The Electrical Man", won the Quebec Drama Festival award for best play in 1975. He has had 28 plays produced and the majority have been musicals including: "Cheatin' Hearts" - written with David Smyth; "Hot Flashes" - written with John Roby; "Judy!" (Dora Mavor Moore Award nominee); "Honky Tonk Angels" with Ferne Downey; two collaborations with David Young: "Love Is Strange" and the Dora Mavor Moore Award and Chalmers Best Play Award-winning "Fire"; "Dream a Little Dream" a musical about The Mamas and The Papas, co-written with the group's lead singer, Denny Doherty; and "The Secret Garden", an adaptation of the novel by Francis Hobson Burnett.

INTRODUCTION BY KATE BUTLER MACDONALD

I must tell you that I was leery when my family was asked to consider the possibility of granting permission for yet another format for "Anne of Green Gables" — a dramatic stage adaptation written by Paul Ledoux for a specifically youthful audience. My grandmother's most famous novel had already been adapted for the movies, television and a musical stage play and my family and I are quite protective when it comes to "Anne Shirley" and her world.

One of the more dramatic memories of my childhood was flying on a VIP private jet with my father (Dr. Stuart Macdonald, L.M. Montgomery's younger son) to Charlottetown, PEI to unveil a plaque and be part of the launching ceremonies of the MV L. M. Montgomery — the ferry that would travel between Wood Island and the mainland. This was all arranged as part of the Centennial Year Celebrations in 1967 and we were accompanied by many prominent dignitaries and Gracie Finley who, at the time, was playing the lead role in the very successful, long-running Canadian Stage Musical play, "Anne of Green Gables". Later that year I was invited backstage to meet again with Gracie Finley and the other cast members. There is something about the magic of live theatre that can't be duplicated on screen and it was a thrilling occasion for a nine year old girl from Toronto.

The magic of the theatre has yet again thrilled me and a new generation of Montgomery's heirs. My nine-year old daughter, Eliza and ten-year old son, Graydon, and I attended the opening of Paul Ledoux's dramatic stage adaptation of "Anne" at the Young People's Theatre in Toronto in April of 1998. This is a new and fresh adaptation of Anne of Green Gables that brought back the joy of reading this novel for the first time for members of my family. Anne and her life in Avonlea came alive on stage in a charming and touching

dramatic presentation evidenced by the snifflling and tears of the audience at YPT. I could feel how contemporary children could relate to this spirited girl and the endearing characters from Avonlea. I am very pleased to be introducing the reader to this theatrical adaptation of "Anne".

After you have read this adaptation, go back and enjoy the novel again!

*Kate Macdonald Butler, Toronto
May, 1999*

CHARACTERS

The play takes place over a period of about five years, with the children growing up in the process. Their ages are indicated accordingly.

- MARILLA CUTHBERT a tall, thin angular woman; dark hair with some gray streaks twisted up in a hard little knot behind. A woman of narrow experience and rigid conscience, with something about her mouth which might be indicative of a sense of humour.
- MATTHEW CUTHBERT Marilla's brother. A painfully shy farmer in his sixties, but with a stubborn streak and a warm heart. He is described in *Anne of Green Gables* as an ungainly figure with long iron-gray hair that touches his stooping shoulders, and a full, soft brown beard.
- ANNE SHIRLEY A vivacious orphan child - 13 to 17. She much freckled with bright red hair, her eyes full of spirit and vivacity; mercurial, overly dramatic, intelligent, in need of love.
- DIANA BARRY Anne's best friend - 13 to 17. A very pretty little girl, with black eyes and hair, and rosy cheeks, and a merry expression. Not as clever as Anne, but she has a big heart and real charm. Diana often laughs before she speaks.
- RACHEL LYNDE The town's busiest and nosiest leader. Mid-forties. A fat woman who waddles. One of those delightful and popular people who pride themselves on speaking their mind without fear or favour.

GILBERT BLYTHE

Anne's chief competitor and love interest - 14 to 18. A tall boy, with curly brown hair, roguish hazel eyes, and a mouth twisted into a teasing smile. Gilbert is older than the girls because he had to leave school for a year. He is very intelligent and ambitious.

RUBY GILLIS

A friend of Anne - 13 to 17. Ruby is romantic, pretty and, in terms of her interest in other people's business, a 'kindred spirit' of Rachel's. Large, bright-blue eyes, a brilliant complexion, and a plump showy figure. She laughs a great deal, is cheerful and good-tempered, and enjoys the pleasant things of life.

JOSIE PYE

Anne's most troublesome friend - 13 to 17. "Josie is a Pye, so she can't help being disagreeable." Josie Pye is jealous, catty, clever, mischievous and an all-round excellent foil for Anne.

THE SET

The action in "Anne" must move fluidly from location to location and through a number of time periods including Anne's return to Avonlea after Queens and her years growing up in Avonlea. The action must move quickly between playing areas that include the interior at Green Gables; kitchen, parlor and upstairs room for Anne.; the train station, the road to Avonlea, Rachel Lynde's front porch and the interior of the Gillis store and Barry house.

MUSIC

While not a traditional musical in any sense of the word, Anne uses children's rhyming songs and snippets of folk songs and poems to help create the world of Avonlea. In addition, the play uses "The Island Hymn" an original lyric by L.M. Montgomery which was set to "God Save The Queen". Songs are sung without accompaniment or, when called for, with on-stage piano.

"Anne" premiered at The Young People's Theatre, Toronto, on April 5, 1998, with the following cast:

MARILLA CUTHBURT
 RACHEL LYNDE
 MATTHEW CUTHBURT
 DIANA BARRY
 JOSIE PYE Carolyn Hay
 ANNE SHIRLEY
 GILBERT BLYTHE
 RUBY GILLIS Eliza-Jane Scott

Janet Amos
 Robin Craig
 Jerry Franken
 Catherine Gatotos

Jennie Raymond
 Jamie Robinson

Directed by Patricia Vanstone.

Adaptation by Paul Ledoux.

Music by Ian Tamblyn.

Lights by Steven Hawkins.

Set and Costumes by Sue LePage.

Stage Manager - Nancy Dryden.

Assistant Stage Manager - Michael Sinclair.

Act One, Scene One

The Train Station. Avonlea.

RUBY and RACHEL enter and stand in animated but unheard conversation, then break apart as JOSIE and DIANA enter.

RUBY Josie!

RACHEL Diana! Have you heard the news?

RUBY Anne...

RACHEL Anne Shirley...

RUBY &
RACHEL ...has won the Avery Scholarship!

MATTHEW and MARILLA enter, unnoticed.

DIANA The Avery!

JOSIE That's impossible! A girl has never won the Avery Scholarship and I won't believe Anne Shirley is the first.

MARILLA Believe what you will, Josie Pye, it won't alter the fact that our Anne has won full tuition to Richmond University.

MATTHEW In Halifax!

RUBY (sighs) In Halifax.

DIANA and JOSIE go rushing up to MATTHEW. He tries to elude their enthusiastic attention.

JOSIE When did you find out, Mr. Cuthbert?

MATTHEW Well now.... ah....

RACHEL It was in the Charlottetown paper.

DIANA But, we get the Charlottetown paper every night and...

MATTHEW No, not last night... it was in... ah...

MARILLA It was in this morning's paper — the eye doctor brought it out with him.

RUBY The eye doctor?

RACHEL He came out from Charlottetown this morning — to examine Marilla.

DIANA You're having trouble with your eyes?

A flurry of concern from the women.

MARILLA It's nothing anyone should concern themselves with.

DIANA But Marilla....

MARILLA It's nothing! Just some new glasses. In any case, the doctor had the morning paper and right on the front page — there it was.

JOSIE The front page. Oh, Mr. Cuthbert!

Sound of the train pulling in.

MATTHEW Yup, yup, front page.

RACHEL "Avonlea Girl Wins Avery."

MATTHEW Here she comes! I mean, Anne... she's... oh...

MATTHEW rushes off. The girls laugh.

JOSIE Marilla, your brother is still absolutely the shyest man in the whole world.

MARILLA It's his chief virtue if you ask me. And he's right excited. Anne's on the train.

MARILLA walks upstage looking towards the platform. RACHEL follows.

JOSIE Well, I couldn't be more shocked. I mean, everyone expected Gilbert Blythe to win that scholarship. Gilbert was first in the class at Queen's, you know.

RUBY But Anne could always beat Gilbert in English and The Avery is for English.

MARILLA *(sees ANNE)* Anne!

A squeal and a cheer from the girls. ANNE walks on with MATTHEW. They rush to greet her as she works her way towards MARILLA.

RUBY Congratulations, Anne!

ANNE Thank you, Ruby.

JOSIE Yes, congratulations.

ANNE Josie.

DIANA Oh Anne, Halifax!

ANNE Yes, Diana. Halifax.

RACHEL A girl from Avonlea in university, the whole town will be abuzz.

MARILLA We're all so proud of you, Anne.

ANNE *(taking her hand and squeezing it)* Thank you, Marilla. I missed you and Matthew, so much.

MATTHEW *(to ANNE)* Well now, we thought maybe what with the teacher's college and all, you just might forget about Marilla Cuthbert and her old brother.

ANNE Oh Matthew, I thought about you both every night and I was so lonesome for dear old Green Gables.

MATTHEW Well, you're home now... and... and... Hail the conquering Scholar!

Everyone laughs and applauds. MATTHEW is embarrassed.

MATTHEW Ah... ah... best get the trunk. (*exiting past GILBERT who enters, carrying his case*) Gilbert.

JOSIE Gilbert, you're not due back until tomorrow.

GILBERT No, but...no reason to stay in town.

JOSIE Congratulations on coming first. I knew you would.

GILBERT Thank you, Josie. (*to RACHEL*) Mrs. Lynde, my father wrote that there is a possibility of a teaching position here in Avonlea. I'll be applying.

RACHEL You can count on my support, Mr. Blythe.

JOSIE Did you hear that, everyone? Gilbert is going to stay in Avonlea and teach!

ANNE You're not going to Richmond?

JOSIE 'lantic Ocean! Can I believe my ears? Anne Shirley just spoke to Gilbert Blythe.

GILBERT No, not this year, Anne. I have to earn some tuition money first.

JOSIE (*to ANNE*) It will be hard for you to excel without Gilbert to beat, won't it?

GILBERT
& ANNE Honestly, Josie.

JOSIE It's the simple truth and everybody knows it.

GILBERT Ah... well, I didn't get a chance to say it before now, but congratulations on your win, Anne.

He offers ANNE his hand. They shake.

You deserve it.

ANNE Gilbert.

GILBERT Good day.

GILBERT exits.

JOSIE (*chasing GILBERT off*) Gilbert wait, I have the surrey if you need a ride home!

MATTHEW re-enters.

MATTHEW Trunk's on the wagon. Let's go home.

ANNE Yes, let's go home. Will you come over after supper, Diana?

DIANA Put a candle in the window and I will fly to your side.

ANNE And Ruby, you'll come for tea tomorrow morning?

RUBY I'd love to.

MATTHEW, ANNE and MARILLA exit.

DIANA Well, I should be off too. Do come tomorrow, Ruby. I still haven't heard anything at all of your adventures at Queen's.

RUBY Well, I didn't win a scholarship, but I was crowned handsomest girl of the year. And, I shouldn't gossip, but Josie gained eminence as the sharpest-tongued young lady at Queen's.

- DIANA She did!
- RUBY That's right, and she never stopped chasing Gilbert Blythe, not for one second!
- DIANA Poor Josie, she still can't resist Gilbert Blythe.
- RUBY No one ever could.
- DIANA Except Anne. (*as she exits*) See you tomorrow — at eleven!
- RUBY Bye, Diana. Do you remember the day Anne arrived in Avonlea, Mrs. Lynde?
- RACHEL Clearly. It fair drove me to distraction seeing Matthew drive by that afternoon. Now, as you know Ruby, I always keep a sharp eye on everything that passes by.
- RUBY It is 'your duty as your house sits so convenient on the crossroads.'
- RACHEL That's right and if I notice anything odd or out of place. Well! You can just imagine how I felt when I saw Matthew Cuthbert ride by in his buggy, at half-past three on the afternoon during planting season, in his best suit of clothes...
- RUBY It must have driven you to distraction.
- RACHEL I could make nothing of it. Nothing.
- RUBY Matthew Cuthbert would never go to town at that time of year.
- RACHEL Never! So, I set out for Green Gables right away to find out what was what.
- RUBY I was at the station that day, as you'll recall.
- RACHEL That's right, you were on the same train that brought Anne to Avonlea.

RUBY

I was coming back from Charlottetown and... well , she was the queerest looking girl you ever saw and I swear she didn't stop talking, not for a moment, from the time I got on the train until the moment I got off. 'Course I heard Mrs. Spencer say she was for the Cuthberts, so, when I saw Mr. Cuthbert drive up I wasn't the least surprised.

Act One, Scene Two

*The Train Station. Avonlea. Four Years Earlier.
DIANA and JOSIE come on playing hide
and seek. GILBERT runs through and teases
them, then runs off as MATTHEW walks on.*

JOSIE Hello, Sir!

*MATTHEW starts, looks uncomfortable and
nods. He turns away.*

JOSIE Lovely evening, isn't it?

MATTHEW (*almost jumps*) Well now. I... I... lovely.

*DIANA and JOSIE run off. MATTHEW
walks towards the station. On the platform we
find ANNE sitting on a bench. This is the
young ANNE, dressed in a tattered orphan's
dress. She looks tense — rigidity and
expectation in her attitude and expression.
MATTHEW tries to sidle past ANNE as
quickly as possible without looking at her. She
stares at him. He glances at her, glances away
and glances back again. Suddenly she bounds
to her feet. He jumps.*

ANNE I suppose you are Mr. Matthew Cuthbert of
Green Gables? I am very glad you've come. I
was beginning to be afraid you weren't coming
for me and I was imagining all the horrible
things that could have happened to prevent
you. I had made up my mind that if you didn't
come, I'd go down the track to that big wild
cherry-tree at the bend, and climb up into it to
stay all night. It would be lovely to sleep in a
wild cherry-tree all white with bloom in the

moonshine, don't you think? I wouldn't be a bit afraid.

MATTHEW Ah... Well now, the horse is over in the yard.
Give me your bag.

ANNE Oh, I can carry it. I've got all my worldly
goods in it, but it isn't heavy. And if it isn't
carried in just a certain way the handle pulls
out — so I'd better keep it because I know the
exact knack of it.

*As she picks up the bag, the handle breaks.
She carries the bag off in her arms.*

Oh, I'm very glad you've come, even if it
would have been nice to sleep in a cherry-tree.

MATTHEW (*watching her go*) Well now.

MATTHEW follows ANNE off.

Act One, Scene Three

Green Gables.

The back porch. RACHEL approaches.

RACHEL It's no wonder Matthew and Marilla are both a little odd, living way back off the road by themselves. I'd not call living in such a place living at all. It's just staying, that's what.
(calling off) Marilla!

MARILLA comes to the door.

MARILLA Rachel, what took you so long?

RACHEL Marilla, I saw Matthew driving to town and—
Took me so long?

MARILLA Come in, I'm making tea.

MARILLA leads RACHEL inside the darkened kitchen.

RACHEL I... I thought maybe you were having one of your bad headaches and he was gone for the Doctor.

MARILLA There's no call for a doctor.

RACHEL Then what is going on?

MARILLA It's nothing really, Rachel.

RACHEL Marilla, three places are laid. That is more than nothing!

MARILLA Oh, for goodness sake, Rachel, it's of no importance. Matthew is getting up in years, you know, and he isn't as spry as he once was.

So, when we heard Mrs. Spencer was going over to get a little girl from the orphanage in Halifax, we sent her word to bring us a smart, likely boy to help out around the place.

RACHEL An orphan boy!

MARILLA He's coming on the train tonight.

RACHEL Marilla, bringing a strange child into your house and home? Why, only last week I read in the paper how a man and his wife up west of the Island took a boy out of an orphan asylum and he set fire to the house — set it on purpose, Marilla — and burnt them to a crisp.

MARILLA To a crisp?

RACHEL To a crisp, and I know another case where an adopted boy used to suck the eggs.

MARILLA Suck the eggs!

RACHEL They couldn't break him of it. If you had asked my advice in the matter, which you didn't do, Marilla, I'd have said; "For mercy's sake don't even think of such a thing."

MARILLA *(sighs)* Oh, I don't deny there's something in what you say, Rachel, but Matthew has set his mind to it and it's so seldom Matthew sets his mind on anything, that I feel it's my duty to give in.

RACHEL Yes, well, it couldn't have happened at a worse time. I'll be off to Carmody tomorrow and not back until my eldest, Mary, has delivered her third child, so I'll be of no help in dealing with the orphan.

MARILLA Well, it will be a great hardship for us, I'm sure, but I suppose we'll just have to struggle along and hope for the best.

RACHEL I suppose you will. I just pray he doesn't put
poison in the well. An orphan over in New
Brunswick did that and the whole family died
in fearful agonies. Only, it was a girl in that
instance.

MARILLA Well, we're not getting a girl. I'd never dream
of taking a girl, so that is of no concern.

Act One, Scene Four

The Avenue.

MATTHEW and ANNE drive through a cherry orchard at dusk. The children create an archway of cherry blossoms for them to drive through.

On tape we hear the children singing a nursery rhyme — In And Out The Window.

CHILDREN *(tape)* Go in and out the window.
Go in and out the window.
To see what we can see
Go round and round the village
Go round and round the village
To see what we can see

ANNE What is this place called?

MATTHEW The Avenue.

ANNE Oh no, it's too beautiful for that. We have to think of a better name, Matthew. I know! We can call it The White Way of Delight. That would be a fitting name because there are cherry-trees in bloom everywhere, aren't there!

MATTHEW Ah... yup.

ANNE This is the bloomiest place in the whole world! Even more beautiful than I'd imagined. It's delightful when your imaginings come true, isn't it.

MATTHEW Well now, I don't know.

ANNE Am I talking too much? People are always telling me I do. If you say so, I'll stop. I can stop when I make up my mind to it, although it's difficult.

MATTHEW Oh, you can talk as much as you like. I don't mind.

ANNE Oh, I'm so glad. It's such a relief to talk when one wants to and not be told that children should be seen and not heard. *(beat)* I feel pretty nearly perfectly happy. I can't feel exactly perfectly happy because — well, what colour would you call this?

She twitches one of her long glossy braids over her thin shoulder.

MATTHEW It's red, ain't it?

ANNE *(a sigh that seems to come from her very toes)* Yes, it's red. Now you see why I can't be perfectly happy. I don't mind the other things so much — the freckles and the green eyes and my skinniness. I can imagine them away. But I cannot imagine red hair away. It will be my lifelong sorrow that I am so homely. Which would you rather be if you had the choice — divinely beautiful or dazzlingly clever or angelically good?

MATTHEW Well now, I— I don't know exactly.

ANNE Neither do I. I can never decide. But it doesn't make much real difference for it isn't likely I'll ever be either. It's certain I'll never be angelically good. *(pause)* Oh, isn't that pretty!

MATTHEW That's Barry's Pond.

ANNE The water's the most spiritual shadings of crocus and rose and ethereal green, with elusive tints for which no name has ever been found! I shall call it — let me see — the Lake

of Shining Waters. Isn't that a nice imaginative name?

MATTHEW Well now...

ANNE I am convinced that is the right name for it. I know because of the thrill. When I hit on a name that suits exactly, it gives me a thrill. Do things ever give you a thrill?

MATTHEW Well now, yes. It always kind of gives me a thrill to see them ugly white grubs that spade up in the cucumber beds. I hate the look of them.

ANNE Oh, I don't think that can be exactly the same kind of a thrill. There doesn't seem to be much connection between grubs and lakes of shining waters, does there?

MATTHEW Well... That's Green Gables over—

ANNE Oh, don't tell me — let me guess. I'm sure I'll guess right. (*ANNE closes her eyes and then opens them and looks around.*) There... the house away to the left, far back from the road. The one surrounded by the blossoming apple trees with the crystal-white star over it... shining like a lamp of guidance and promise. That is my new home!

Transition. The children run on playing hide and seek.

JOSIE (*tape*) Diana, I can hear your mother calling you.

DIANA (*tape*) Coming! Bye!

GILBERT (*tape*) Cows need milkin'.

RUBY (*tape*) See you tomorrow.

JOSIE (*tape*) Gilbert, wait up!

Act One, Scene Five

Green Gables.

ANNE and MATTHEW enter. MARILLA is sitting on the back porch peeling potatoes.

ANNE (to MATTHEW) It seems so wonderful that I'm going to live with you and belong to you. I've never belonged to anybody — not really.

MARILLA Matthew Cuthbert, where is the boy?

MATTHEW (wretchedly) There wasn't any boy. There was only her.

MARILLA Well, this is a pretty piece of business!

ANNE drops her bag and clasps her hands.

ANNE You don't want me! You don't want me because I'm not a boy! (bursts into tears) I might have known it was all too beautiful to last. Nobody ever did want me.

MARILLA Now, now, there's no need to cry, child... What's her name?

MATTHEW Well, now...I forgot to ask.

ANNE (eagerly) Will you please call me Cordelia?

MARILLA Call you Cordelia? Is that your name?

ANNE No-o-o, it's not exactly my name, but I would love to be called Cordelia. It's such a perfectly elegant name.

MARILLA I don't know what on earth you mean. If Cordelia isn't your name, what is?

- ANNE Anne Shirley, but, oh, please do call me Cordelia. It can't matter much to you what you call me if I'm only going to be here a little while, can it? And Anne is such an unromantic name.
- MARILLA Unromantic, fiddlesticks! Anne is a real good, plain, sensible name.
- ANNE If you call me Anne, please call me Anne spelled with an E?
- MARILLA (*a rusty smile flickers*) What difference does it make how it's spelled?
- ANNE Oh, it makes such a difference. When you hear a name pronounced, can't you always see it in your mind, just as if it was printed out? I can and A-n-n looks dreadful, but A-n-n-e looks so much more distinguished. If you'll only call me Anne spelled with an E, I shall try to reconcile myself to not being called Cordelia.
- MARILLA Very well, then, Anne spelled with an E, can you tell us how this mistake came to be made?
- ANNE I don't know. Mrs. Spencer said distinctly that you wanted a girl. (*reproachfully, turning to MATTHEW*) Oh, why didn't you tell me at the station that you didn't want me and leave me there?
- MATTHEW Well now, I just couldn't think how to say it.
- MARILLA I'm sorry, child. We wanted a boy to help Matthew on the farm. A girl is of no use to us.
- ANNE (*sighs*) I am in the depths of despair. Have you ever been in the depths of despair?
- MARILLA No, I've never been in the depths of despair.
- ANNE Well, did you ever try to imagine you were in the depths of despair?

MARILLA No, I didn't. Go put your bag in the spare room, top of the stairs.

ANNE It's a very uncomfortable feeling indeed.

MARILLA Oh! Shoo!

MARILLA points imperiously and ANNE goes upstairs.

MARILLA Well, this is a pretty kettle of fish. She'll have to be sent back to the asylum.

MATTHEW It's kind of a pity to send her back when she's so set on staying here.

MARILLA But what good would she be to us?

MATTHEW We might be some good to her.

MARILLA Matthew Cuthbert, I believe that child has bewitched you!

MATTHEW She's a real interesting little thing, Marilla. You should have heard her talk coming from the station.

MARILLA Oh, she can talk fast enough. I saw that at once. It's nothing in her favour, either. She's got to be dispatched straight-way back to where she came from.

MATTHEW Well now, it's just as you say, of course. We can talk it over again tomorrow.

Music bridges to early morning and next scene.

Act One, Scene Six

Green Gables.

ANNE looks out her bedroom window.

ANNE This is as lovely as anything I've ever dreamed. Oh, there is scope for imagination here!

MARILLA enters. She's wearing her best dress and her mother's amethyst brooch.

ANNE Isn't it wonderful?

MARILLA What?

ANNE Everything! That big old cherry tree for instance - so thick-set with blossoms that hardly a leaf is to be seen.

MARILLA It's a big tree and it blooms great, but the fruit don't amount to much never — small and wormy.

ANNE Still, it blooms as if it meant it.

MARILLA looks at the tangle of ANNE's hair and begins to try and fix it up.

ANNE I've been imagining that it was really me you wanted after all and that I was to stay here for ever and ever. And every spring Matthew and I would climb high into the cherry tree and—

MARILLA For pity's sake, hold your tongue. You talk entirely too much for a little girl.

ANNE Sorry.

MARILLA What's to be done with you, I don't know.
Matthew is a most ridiculous man.

ANNE I think he's lovely. I felt that he was a
kindred spirit as soon as I saw him.

MARILLA You're both queer enough, if that's what you
mean by kindred spirits.

*A pause. MARILLA struggles with the hair.
ANNE looks up at her.*

ANNE What is the stone in that brooch you are
wearing, Miss Cuthbert?

MARILLA It is amethyst.

ANNE It's so beautiful, it makes you look like a... a
Queen.

MARILLA It was my mother's. She was just a plain
farmer's wife and that was good enough for
her.

ANNE I think to be a farmer's wife in Avonlea is as
good as being a Queen.

MARILLA Shuss.

ANNE Sorry.

*MARILLA continues to awkwardly fix her
hair.*

ANNE Did you ever know of anybody whose hair was
red when she was young, but got to be another
colour when she grew up?

MARILLA No, and I shouldn't think it likely to happen
in your case either.

ANNE (*sighs*) Well, that is another hope gone. 'My
life is a perfect graveyard of buried hopes.'
That's a sentence I read in a book once, and I

say it over to comfort myself whenever I'm disappointed in anything.

MARILLA As you're evidently bent on talking you might as well talk to some purpose by telling me what you know about yourself. (*as ANNE takes a deep breath, MARILLA jumps back in*) And just stick to bald facts.

ANNE I was born in Nova Scotia and turned thirteen last March. My mother's name was Bertha Shirley and my father's name was Walter Shirley. They were teachers. I believe a good teacher is worth their weight in gold, don't you?.

MARILLA It's a job that needs doing, that's for certain. What happened to your parents?

ANNE They died of fever when I was just three months old. That left me an orphan. Mrs. Thomas said folks were at their wits' end. Nobody wanted me even then. It seems to be my fate.

MARILLA Who was Mrs. Thomas?

ANNE A woman who worked for my mother cleaning. I had no relatives so Mrs. Thomas said she'd take me, though she was poor and had a drunken husband. When I got big enough I helped look after the Thomas children. There were four of them and I can tell you they took a lot of looking after.

MARILLA Why did she send you to the orphanage?

ANNE Oh, she didn't! Mr. Thomas was killed falling under a train. His mother offered to take Mrs. Thomas and the children, but she didn't want me. So, Mrs. Hammond said she'd take me as I was handy with children.

Mrs. Hammond had twins three times. I like babies in moderation, but twins three times in succession is too much. I told Mrs. Hammond so firmly, after the last pair. I used to get so dreadfully tired carrying them about.

MARILLA Yes, I suppose you would.

ANNE I lived with the Hammonds until Mrs. Hammond died and then I had to go to the asylum in Halifax.

MARILLA Were those women — Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Hammond — good to you?

ANNE O-o-o-h... Oh, they meant to be — I know they meant to be just as good and kind as possible. But it's very trying to have a drunken husband and it must be even more trying to have twins three times in succession, don't you think?

MATTHEW enters below and yells up the stairs.

MATTHEW I took your message to Mrs. Spencer.

MARILLA comes down, followed by ANNE.

MARILLA Did she explain what happened?

MATTHEW She said it was our own fault for sending word by her brother, who's stupid as a post. And I said you were of a mind to send Anne back and then...

He pulls out a small paper bag and hands it to ANNE.

MATTHEW Ah... I heard you young ones liked chocolate sweeties, so I got you some.

ANNE takes the candies and is about to eat one. MARILLA glares at MATTHEW.

MARILLA It'll ruin her teeth and stomach.

ANNE stops, candy just about in her mouth.

There, there child don't look so dismal. You can eat those since Matthew has gone and got them, just don't sicken yourself eating them all at once.

ANNE pops candy into her mouth,

(to MATTHEW) Well, what did Mrs. Spencer say?

MATTHEW She couldn't get a word in edgeways. That Hester Blewett was there!

MARILLA Hester Blewett!

ANNE Who is Hester Blewett?

MATTHEW The most stingy, quarrelsome woman in all of White Sands is who. And everybody knows it.

ANNE Oh. Somehow this feels like the end of everything.

MATTHEW She said that as she was due soon, she thought she might have use for a hard-working girl so long as she didn't eat too much.

ANNE Due soon?

MARILLA With her eighth baby.

ANNE Oh.

ANNE glumly puts another candy in her mouth.

MARILLA Anne, take your candy outside and go play. Matthew and I must have a talk.

ANNE slumps out of the house. Then, overwhelmed by the country-side, she rushes off.

MATTHEW I wouldn't give a dog I liked to that Blewett woman.

MARILLA Oh Matthew, the mute misery on her face, like a creature caught in a trap she thought she had escaped. If I deny the appeal of that look, it will haunt me to my dying day.

MATTHEW Are you saying she can stay?

ANNE re-enters and seeing a flower, climbs the garden trellis to pick it. She's in a precarious position by the time MARILLA goes to call her.

MARILLA Yes, Matthew, she may stay. But you're not to interfere. Perhaps an old maid doesn't know much about bringing up a child, but I guess she knows more than an old bachelor. When I fail, it'll be time enough to put your oar in.

MATTHEW You can have your own way.

MARILLA I will. *(looking out the door and terrified ANNE may fall)* Anne! Get down from there and come in! *(to MATTHEW)* I've never brought up a child, especially a girl, and I dare say I'll make a terrible mess of it. But I'll do my best.

ANNE rushes back in.

ANNE I'm sorry I climbed the trellis, Miss Cuthbert, but I saw some children playing in the woods and I thought—

MARILLA It doesn't matter, child.

ANNE It's final then, I am to go to Hester Blewett.

MARILLA Well, she certainly needs you more than we do but... Matthew and I have decided to keep you.

ANNE begins to cry.

ANNE You will? You will keep me? Oh, I'm glad as glad can be. Oh, it's something more than glad. I'm so happy.

MARILLA Why, child, whatever is the matter? You're crying.

ANNE I know. I can't think why.

MARILLA Try to calm yourself. I'm afraid you both cry and laugh far too easily. And mind, if you're not good we may yet conclude to let Mrs. Blewett take you.

ANNE I'll try to be so good. It will be uphill work, I expect. What am I to call you? Shall I always say, Miss Cuthbert?

MARILLA No, you'll call me just plain Marilla. I'm not used to being called Miss Cuthbert and it would make me nervous.

ANNE It sounds awfully disrespectful to just say Marilla.

MARILLA I guess there'll be nothing disrespectful in it if you're careful to speak respectfully.

ANNE Can I call you Aunt Marilla? I'd love to call you Aunt Marilla. I've never had an aunt or any relation at all — not even a grandmother. It would make me feel as if I really belonged to you — Aunt Marilla.

MARILLA I'm not your aunt and I don't believe in calling people names that don't belong to them.

ANNE But we could imagine you were my aunt.

MARILLA I couldn't.

ANNE Don't you ever imagine things different from what they really are?

MARILLA No.

ANNE Oh! Oh, Marilla, how much you miss!

MARILLA (*holds her head*) Oh child, go back outside and play.

ANNE May I? There is so much to see and discover and learn to love here that I am sure it will keep me busy forever!

MARILLA Go on child, have a look around, but be home in time for dinner. It's served at twelve sharp. Twelve sharp, mind — we are very punctual here at Green Gables.

ANNE Oh, thank you, Marilla, thank you, Matthew. From the very depths of my soul — thank you!

*ANNE squeezes her hand and kisses
MATTHEW, then runs off.*

MATTHEW Ain't she something interesting?

Act One, Scene Seven

The Store.

RACHEL is giving RUBY, who is working in her father's store, some letters to mail. RUBY hands her a box.

RACHEL And is there anything in the mails for The Lyndes?

RUBY Not today, Mrs. Lynde. But Josie Pye was by. She says Gilbert has made formal application to the school.

RACHEL Yes he has, and, if I know anything at all about the Board of Trustees, the job is his. Did you notice how both Gilbert and Anne jumped at Josie at the station?

RUBY "Honestly Josie!" (*laughs*) I suppose that is the first time they were ever in agreement over anything since the first day Anne arrived in Avonlea. Do you remember when the Cuthberts decided to keep her?

RACHEL No, by the time I got back summer was upon us. I felt like half a decade had slipped by rather than a month! So, just as soon as I was unpacked, well — you can imagine. I mean, I'd been away so long that Marilla, poor thing, had made three dresses for the girl all on her own!

Musical bridge. The young DIANA, GILBERT and JOSIE play as they sing Jenny Jenkins.

CHILDREN Oh will you wear red oh my dear, oh my dear
Oh will you wear red Jenny Jenkins?
No I won't wear red it's the colour of my head
But I'll buy me a folly, roly, tilly tolly

Cause a double roll & roll away to find me
Roll Jennie Jenkins roll

Act One, Scene Eight

Green Gables.

The younger ANNE is standing in the kitchen wearing a very plain dress. Two more are laid out on the table. MARILLA solemnly looks at her handiwork. All the dresses are made alike — plain skirts fitted tightly to plain waists, with tight sleeves.

MARILLA How do you like them?

ANNE I'll imagine that I like them.

MARILLA Imagine it! What is the matter with them?

ANNE (*reluctantly*) They're--they're not--pretty.

MARILLA Pretty! I don't believe in pampering vanity, Anne, I'll tell you that right off.

ANNE But having pretty things isn't always just vanity, Marilla. You have your amethyst brooch and you aren't vain.

MARILLA These are good, sensible dresses, without any frills or furbelows about them. I should think you'd be grateful to get most anything.

ANNE Oh, I am grateful, but if... if you'd make just one with puffed sleeves it would give me such a thrill, Marilla! Puffed sleeves are so fashionable now.

MARILLA Well, you'll have to do without your thrill. Puffed sleeves are ridiculous-looking things and a waste of good material.

ANNE (*mournfully*) But I'd rather look ridiculous along with everybody else, than plain all by myself.

MARILLA Go and hang up those dresses carefully in the closet.

ANNE Yes, Marilla. (*exiting*) I'll just imagine that this one is of snow-white muslin with lovely lace frills and three-puffed sleeves.

ANNE walks off with her dresses. A beat and then RACHEL comes hurrying on.

RACHEL Marilla! Marilla!

MARILLA I'm here Rachel, no need to hurt yourself yelling.

RACHEL I've come to meet your orphan. What a surprise. Couldn't you have sent her back?

MARILLA I suppose we could, but... Matthew took a fancy to her. And I must say she's a real bright little thing. The house seems a different place already. Anne! Come downstairs.

RACHEL It's a great responsibility, no doubt about that. There's no guessing how a child like that will turn out. But I don't want to discourage you, Marilla.

MARILLA I'm not in the least discouraged, Rachel. When I make up my mind to do something it stays made up.

ANNE comes running in wearing the prettiest of the dresses.

MARILLA Anne, this is our neighbour Mrs. Lynde.

RACHEL Oh, Marilla, she's so terrible homely and skinny! They didn't pick you for your looks, that's sure and certain girl. Lawful heart, did

any one ever see such freckles? And hair as red as carrots!

ANNE, face scarlet with anger and her whole slender form trembling, advances on RACHEL.

ANNE Carrots! How dare you! You are a rude, impolite, unfeeling woman! I hate you, I hate you, I hate you!

MARILLA Anne!

ANNE How would you like me to say such things about you?

RACHEL Why...Why... Why...

ANNE You are fat and clumsy and probably haven't a spark of imagination in you!

RACHEL Did anybody ever see such a temper!

ANNE Temper!

MARILLA Anne, go to your room!

ANNE You have hurt me worse than I have ever been hurt before and I'll never forgive you.

ANNE, bursts into tears, rushes to her room.

ANNE Never, never, never!

RACHEL Well, there is no telling what an orphan girl can do. I don't envy you your job bringing that up, Marilla.

MARILLA You shouldn't have twitted her about her looks, Rachel.

RACHEL Marilla Cuthbert, you don't mean to say that you are upholding her in such a terrible display of temper?

MARILLA No, but she's never been taught what is right. And you were too hard on her, Rachel.

RACHEL Well, I see that I'll have to be very careful what I say after this, Marilla, since the fine feelings of orphans have to be considered before anything else. Good day, Marilla. I hope you'll come down to see me as you can't expect me to visit here again.

RACHEL exits and MARILLA goes up to ANNE's room where ANNE sits looking miserable.

MARILLA Anne! How could you display such temper before Mrs. Rachel Lynde, of all people! Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

ANNE She hadn't any right to call me ugly and redheaded.

MARILLA You say it yourself often enough.

ANNE There's a difference between saying a thing yourself and hearing other people say it. Something just rose right up in me and I had to fly out at her.

MATTHEW enters and calls up the stairs.

MATTHEW Marilla? Rachel... she just, well... she... she just give me an earful!

MARILLA I'm not surprised! Anne made a fine exhibition of herself and Mrs. Lynde will have a nice story to tell everywhere! (to ANNE) And she'll tell it, too!

ANNE I'm sorry, Marilla, I'm sorry I've vexed you; but I'm glad I told her just what I did. It was a great satisfaction.

MARILLA *(softer)* Rachel is too outspoken, but that is no excuse. She was an elder and my visitor. You should have been respectful, but you were rude and saucy and now — you must go and ask her to forgive you.

ANNE You can punish me in any way you like, Marilla. You can shut me up in a dark, damp dungeon inhabited by snakes and toads and feed me only on bread and water and I shall not complain. But I cannot ask Mrs. Lynde to forgive me.

MARILLA I'm not in the habit of shutting people up in dark damp dungeons. They're rather scarce in Avonlea. But apologize to Mrs. Lynde; you must. *(exiting)* And you'll stay in your room until you tell me you're willing to do it.

ANNE *(mournfully)* I shall have to stay there forever then, because I can't say I'm sorry when I'm not and I can't even imagine I'm sorry.

*MARILLA comes down the stairs to
MATTHEW.*

MATTHEW It's a good thing Rachel Lynde got a calling down. She's a meddlesome old gossip.

MARILLA Matthew Cuthbert, I'm astonished at you. Anne's behavior was dreadful! I suppose you'll be saying next thing that she oughtn't to be punished at all!

MATTHEW Well now — no — not exactly. I reckon she ought to be punished... a little... But—

MARILLA She'll stay in her room until she's willing to apologize to Mrs. Lynde, and that's final, Matthew. Now, I am going to feed the chickens.

MARILLA exits. MATTHEW watches her go and then quickly goes to the stairs and calls to ANNE. A whispered conversation.

MATTHEW Anne can you hear me?

ANNE Yes, Matthew I can hear you.

MATTHEW Then come on down here for a minute.

ANNE I can't.

MATTHEW Marilla's out now and I need to talk to you.

ANNE Very well, Matthew. I'll risk her wrath again... for you.

ANNE enters.

MATTHEW Anne, don't you think you'd better do it and have it over with? It'll have to be done sooner or later, you know, for Marilla's a dreadful determined woman — dreadful determined.

ANNE Do you mean apologize to Mrs. Lynde?

MATTHEW (*eagerly*) Just smooth it over so to speak. That's what I was trying to get at.

ANNE Oh, Matthew. It would be true enough to say I am sorry, because I am sorry now. I was mad clear through but now I feel so ashamed of myself. It would be humiliating. But, I'd do anything for you — if you really want me to.

MATTHEW Well now, of course I do. It'd be terrible lonesome downstairs without you. Just go and smooth things over — that's a good girl.

ANNE Very well, I'll tell Marilla as soon as she comes back that I've repented.

MATTHEW That's right — that's right, Anne. But don't tell Marilla I said anything about it. She might think I was putting my oar in and I promised not to do that.

ANNE Wild horses won't drag the secret from me.

MARILLA (*off*) Anne are you in the kitchen?

ANNE Yes, Marilla.

MARILLA (*enters*) Well, why are you down here?

ANNE I came to tell you I'm sorry I lost my temper and said rude things, and I'm willing to apologize.

MARILLA Very well. I'll take you down to Rachel's place right away, before she spreads the story all over Avonlea.

ANNE suddenly goes from dejected to radiant.

MARILLA What are you thinking of, Anne?

ANNE I'm imagining out what I must say to Mrs. Lynde.

Music bridges to next scene.

Act One, Scene Nine

RACHEL's Front Porch.

RACHEL enters carrying a wicker chair. She is putting her summer furniture on the porch. GILBERT, RUBY, JOSIE and DIANA play a game that follows the lyrics to This Pretty Little Girl of Mine. All the girls want to kiss GILBERT.

ALL See this pretty little girl of mine
 She brought me a penny and a bottle of wine
 A bottle of wine and a penny too
 To see what my little girl can do

GIRLS Down on the carpet you must kneel

RACHEL Gilbert!

GIRLS While the grass grows high and green
 Stand up straight up on your feet
 And choose the very one that you love sweet

RACHEL Gilbert Blythe!

GIRLS Now you are married I wish you joy
 First to a girl and second to a boy
 Seven years after seven years to come
 To kneel on the carpet, kiss and be done

DIANA Josie, it's my turn.

As ANNE and MARILLA approach. The children stop playing and watch. As she walks toward RACHEL, ANNE's radiance vanishes. Mournful penitence on every feature.

She walks up to RACHEL and goes down on her knees and holds out her hands beseechingly. The girls don't know what to think and whisper back and forth.

ANNE Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry. I could never express all my sorrow, no, not if I used up a whole dictionary. You must just imagine it. I behaved terribly to you and I've disgraced my dear friends, Matthew and Marilla, who have let me stay at Green Gables although I'm not a boy. I am dreadfully wicked. Every word you said was true. My hair is red and I'm freckled and skinny and ugly. Everything I said was true as well, but I should never have said it except for my unquenchable temper. Oh, Mrs. Lynde, please, please, forgive me. If you refuse, it will be a lifelong sorrow on a poor little orphan girl.

RACHEL There, there, get up, child. Of course I forgive you.

ANNE Oh thank you. Thank you forever!

RACHEL Now, now, I was a little too hard on you, anyway. But I'm such an outspoken person. You just mustn't mind me, that's what. It can't be denied your hair is terrible red but I knew a girl once — went to school with her, in fact — whose hair was as red as yours, but when she grew up it darkened to a real handsome auburn. I wouldn't be a mite surprised if yours did, too — not a mite.

ANNE Oh, Mrs. Lynde! You have given me hope. I could endure anything if I only thought my hair would be a handsome auburn when I grew up. I shall always feel that you are a benefactor.

RACHEL *(to MARILLA)* She's a real odd little thing, Marilla, but there is something taking about her after all. On the whole, Marilla, I kind of

like her. Who would fancy some raspberry cordial?

ANNE Raspberry cordial. In my whole life I've never had something so appealing.

RACHEL It won't take a moment.

RACHEL exits to get the cordial. The girls go back to their skipping.

ANNE (*proudly*) I apologized pretty thoroughly, didn't I?

MARILLA You did it thoroughly enough, all right.

ANNE It gives you a lovely, comfortable feeling to apologize and be forgiven, doesn't it?

MARILLA I suppose it does.

ANNE I'll not talk any more just now, Marilla.

MARILLA Thanks be to goodness for that.

ANNE Except... Marilla, do you think that I shall ever have a bosom friend in Avonlea?

RACHEL comes on with the cordial.

MARILLA A— a what kind of friend?

ANNE A bosom friend — an intimate friend, you know — a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul. So many of my loveliest dreams have come true all at once that perhaps this one will, too. Do you think it's possible, Mrs. Lynde?

RACHEL Well, I suppose so. Diana Barry lives right near you over at Orchard Slope and she's about your age.

ANNE What's she like? Her hair isn't red, is it?

MARILLA See for yourself, girl. That's her right there.

RACHEL Diana! Diana Barry come over here, girl!

The girls stop skipping and watch as DIANA crosses to RACHEL's porch.

DIANA Yes, Mrs. Lynde?

RACHEL Diana, this is Anne Shirley who has moved to Green Gables. As you're to be neighbours, you should probably be introduced and there's no time like the present.

ANNE Hello, Diana.

DIANA Hello, Anne.

JOSIE Diana! We're going to my place for tea! Are you coming?

DIANA Ah... ah... I've got to go.

DIANA starts to leave.

ANNE Do you play in the woods!

DIANA Pardon?

ANNE The woods between your farm and Green Gables.

DIANA I've been playing there since I was a baby.

ANNE They're haunted you know.

DIANA They are!

ANNE Well, I'm just pretending they're haunted although perhaps I shouldn't because my imagination is so well-honed I'm sure in no time I'll be seeing the ghost of a mysterious woman walking on the bridge over the lake of shining waters or a child crying by the brook

for her long lost mother.

DIANA That sounds just like something right out of a book.

ANNE It does?

JOSIE Diana!

DIANA I have to go.

ANNE Oh, yes I suppose you must, but I'm sure I'll see you again soon. Tomorrow?

DIANA I can't tomorrow — my mother is taking me to Charlottetown. I'm supposed to spend most of the summer with my Aunt.

ANNE You are?

JOSIE tries to take DIANA's hand and lead her away. DIANA pulls her hand away. JOSIE is amazed and hurt.

DIANA Yes, Mother says it will be an education to spend the summer in town.

ANNE Well then... I guess we'll meet again when school starts.

JOSIE Diana!!!

DIANA I hope so. Bye!

DIANA runs to the other girls.

ANNE Oh, I'm so glad she's pretty. Next to being beautiful oneself — and that's impossible in my case — it would be best to have a beautiful bosom friend.

RACHEL I suppose so, now Marilla, come and see how the new quilt is coming along. And you come too, Anne. I am famous for my quilts.

*ANNE and MARILLA follow RACHEL
inside.*

ANNE Oh, Marilla, I think she might truly become
my bosom friend, don't you?

A beat. Lights shift.

Act One, Scene Ten

RACHEL's Front Porch.

GILBERT enters with a basket of apples and crosses the stage towards RACHEL's.

GILBERT Mrs. Lynde?

RACHEL comes out of her house wearing a shawl.

RACHEL Good afternoon, Gilbert.

GILBERT My father sent some apples.

RACHEL Thank you, Gilbert. How are your prospects for harvest?

GILBERT Fair to middlin', ma'am.

RACHEL Good, good. I saw Diana Barry today, fresh back from Charlottetown.

GILBERT Yes, ma'am.

RACHEL And school starts tomorrow! Fall must truly be upon us.

GILBERT Yes, ma'am, do you want some help taking in your furniture?

RACHEL Gilbert Blythe, you're getting to be quite the young gentleman.

Music bridge to the next scene.

Act One, Scene Eleven

Green Gables.

MARILLA is rummaging around the kitchen looking for something. She's in an agitated state. Finally she sits down, wraps herself in her shawl and rubs her head, indicating one of her headaches. ANNE comes rushing in.

ANNE Oh, Marilla, I have been having such an elegant time! I was...

MARILLA What time did I tell you to be home, Anne?

ANNE Two o'clock — but—

MARILLA Yes, I told you to come at two o'clock. And it's a quarter to three. When I tell you to come in at a certain time, I mean that time and not half an hour later.

ANNE I am sorry, Marilla, but I was pretending I was Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald trapped in my castle by the evil Baron de Mornay who...

MARILLA Oh, do give me a moment's peace so I can think, child.

ANNE What's the matter, Marilla?

MARILLA I can't seem to find my mother's brooch. I thought I stuck it in my pincushion when I came home from church this morning, but I can't find it anywhere. Did you see anything of it?

ANNE I— I saw it after church. I was passing your door when I saw it on the cushion, so I went in to look at it.

MARILLA Did you touch it?

ANNE Y-e-e-s, I took it up and I pinned it on just to see how it would look.

MARILLA You shouldn't have gone into my room in the first place and you shouldn't have touched a brooch that didn't belong to you in the second. Where did you put it?

ANNE I put it back on the bureau. I didn't think about its being wrong to go in and try on the brooch, Marilla, but I see now that it was and I'll never do it again. That's one good thing about me. I never do the same naughty thing twice.

MARILLA Anne, the brooch is gone. Tell me the truth. Did you take it out and lose it?

ANNE No, I never took the brooch out of your room and that is the truth, if I was to be led to the block for it — although I'm not very certain what a block is. So there, Marilla.

MATTHEW (*enters*) Well, I checked in the buggy. You're sure it hasn't fell down behind the bureau?

MARILLA (*to MATTHEW*) I've looked in every crack and cranny, moved the bureau and taken out the drawers and... (*to ANNE*) Slynness and untruthfulness — that's what you are displaying, Anne Shirley.

ANNE I didn't take the brooch!

MARILLA You must have taken it! I went up to get my shawl and the brooch was gone, and you were the last one in the room. It's a fearful responsibility to have a child in your house who is a thief!

MATTHEW Marilla, there should be allowances made. You said yourself, she's never had any bringing up.

MARILLA Well, she's having it now.

MATTHEW I think—

MARILLA Who's bringing this child up, Matthew, you or me?

MATTHEW Well, now, you.

MARILLA Don't interfere then.

MATTHEW Well now, I ain't interfering. It ain't interfering to have your own opinion. And my opinion is that Anne is no thief!

MARILLA Well, the brooch is gone and she took it, so what would you call her then!

ANNE All right then! I took the brooch!

I took it just as you said. I didn't mean to take it when I went in. But it looked so beautiful when I pinned it on my breast that I was overcome by an irresistible temptation. I knew it would be so much easier to imagine I was the Lady Cordelia if I wore a real amethyst brooch, so, I took it and when I was going over the bridge across the Lake of Shining Waters I took it off because.... Oh, how it did shine in the sunlight! And then, when I was leaning over the bridge, it just slipped through my fingers — so — and went down-down-down, and sank forevermore beneath the Lake of Shining Waters. And that's the best I can do!

MARILLA Anne, you are the very wickedest girl I ever heard of.

ANNE I am and it's your duty to punish me, Marilla. Just so long as I have been thoroughly punished before school starts tomorrow. I'm so looking forward to meeting Diana again and making her my bosom friend.

MARILLA What makes you think that Mrs. Barry will allow her daughter to become friends with a common thief!

ANNE Oh, no, oh Marilla, you can't tell Mrs. Barry I stole your brooch. Matthew — she can't!

MATTHEW Well now, Anne you shouldn't have taken the brooch, but I'm sure you didn't mean it...

MARILLA Matthew Cuthbert, I'm amazed at you! She doesn't appear to realize how wicked she's been at all and you don't seem to realize it, neither.

MARILLA pulls on her shawl and is about to leave, when MATTHEW stops her and points to the shawl.

MATTHEW Marilla Cuthbert!

ANNE Oh!

MARILLA What are you pointing at with such a... smile on your face, Matthew?

MATTHEW That there is your brooch hanging on your shawl.

MARILLA picks the brooch off the shawl.

MARILLA Anne, what is all this rigmarole about!

ANNE I'm sorry, Marilla, but I just did like Matthew told me I should do with Mrs. Lynde.

MARILLA Like Matthew told you?

ANNE He said, "Just sort of smooth it over..."

MATTHEW Anne, you do beat all!

MARILLA Matthew, you've been putting your oar in.

ANNE It's not his fault, Marilla. It just happened is all.

MARILLA But Anne, it wasn't right for you to confess to a thing you hadn't done.

ANNE But I could tell you would never believe me. And why should you believe me? I'm just an orphan girl and nobody knows what I could do.

MARILLA (*pause*) Forgive me, Anne. You are right. I believed you were a thief because of what I have heard said of orphans, not because of what I knew to be true about you. I promise never to mistrust you anymore if you'll just forgive me.

ANNE Of course I forgive you. I would forgive you both anything. You are my saviors.

Music bridge to next scene.

Act One, Scene Twelve

The Woods/Schoolyard.

JOSIE and RUBY come running on laughing.

RUBY Liar, liar, pants on fire!

JOSIE It's true. It's true!

RUBY I don't believe you for a minute, Josie Pye.

DIANA enters.

JOSIE Jealous, jealous, jealous. (*seeing DIANA*) Diana, have you heard?

DIANA What?

JOSIE Never mind.

DIANA What?

JOSIE zips her lips.

DIANA What? (*no reply*) Josie!

RUBY Josie says she went by the school early and she and Gilbert are written up. There's a 'big Take Notice' on the front porch: "Gilbert loves Josie."

JOSIE I can't believe it.

RUBY Neither can I.

DIANA You and Gilbert Blythe. I could never resist Gilbert Blythe.

They giggle as, unseen by JOSIE, GILBERT

JOSIE *storms on and pulls her hair.*
Oh, Gilbert!

JOSIE squeals, steals his hat and runs off. He follows.

RUBY run off after them. After a moment ANNE rushes on.

ANNE Oh Diana, I am so sorry I am late. It is such a difficult thing to decide what one should wear to school on the first day when none of your dresses have puffs and they're all so terribly plain and... and Marilla said I must be on my very best behavior as your mother is so very strict and respectable and religious and expects the same of all her daughters, especially you, and oh, I am starting off so terribly. I will try again. How are you, Diana?

DIANA Fine, Anne. How are you?

ANNE I am well in body although considerably rumpled in spirit, thank you. There wasn't anything startling in that, was there? Marilla says I say the most startling things and your mother wouldn't approve.

DIANA My mother doesn't approve of anything. She doesn't even approve of me reading and I love books.

ANNE *(almost in a whisper)* Oh, Diana, it's true, you do love books?

DIANA More than anything.

ANNE Oh, this is too wonderful, so do I! Books are the very windows of the imagination. I get so many of my best ideas from books.

DIANA You do?

ANNE Oh, yes, for instance; I think we should call

- DIANA this path Lover's Lane.
 Lover's Lane?
- ANNE Not that lovers ever really walk there, but
 Diana, I am reading a perfectly magnificent
 book and there's a Lover's Lane in it. So, we
 ought to have one, too.
- DIANA It's a very pretty name, so romantic.
- ANNE Yes, it is, isn't it.
- DIANA (*pointing*) There are millions of violets down
 there, too.
- ANNE Oh Diana, it takes away my breath. I think we
 should call this part of our walk Violet Vale.
- DIANA Violet Vale. It's like poetry. I never saw the
 beat of you for hitting on fancy names for
 places, Anne. It's must be nice to be clever at
 something, isn't it?
- ANNE But Diana, you can name places, too. What's
 this path we're turning on to called?
- DIANA I don't know...The Birch Path?
- ANNE The Birch Path. You see that's perfect.
- DIANA But I'm sure you could have found something
 more poetical than plain "Birch Path."
 Anybody can think of a name like that.
- ANNE But Diana, your Birch Path is one of the
 prettiest places in the world. Listen to the
 laugh of wind in the trees overhead.
- DIANA Anne Shirley, I think you are one of the....
 keenest people I have ever met.
- ANNE Oh, Diana, do you mean it? Do you really mean
 it?

- DIANA I do. You're keen and... and... when we get to school I'm going to ask if we can sit together... if you'd like.
- ANNE I'd love it! Oh Diana, do you think you could be my bosom friend?
- DIANA Why, I guess so.
- ANNE You will? You'll swear to be my friend forever and ever?
- DIANA You want me to swear! My mother says it is dreadfully wicked to swear!
- ANNE Oh, no. No, my kind of swearing isn't wicked. It just means making a solemn promise that will last forever and ever.
- DIANA Oh. Well ... how do you do it?
- ANNE (*gravely*) We must join hands. It ought to be over running water but we'll just imagine this path is running water. I'll repeat the oath first. I solemnly swear to be faithful to my bosom friend, Diana Barry, as long as the sun and moon shall endure. Now, you say it and put my name in.
- DIANA (*laughs*) I solemnly swear to be faithful to my bosom friend, Anne, as long as the sun and moon shall endure.
- ANNE That's... magical! I can imagine no better day to be starting at school. It is my intention to be the best scholar in Avonlea and to reach the very head of my class.
- DIANA That will be hard to do, Anne, because of Gilbert Blithe.
- ANNE Who is Gilbert Blythe?

DIANA He is the smartest, most handsome boy in all of Avonlea and every girl in school is mad for him, but he teases us all something terrible. He just torments our lives out.

JOSIE, RUBY and GILBERT come running on. JOSIE has GILBERT's hat.

JOSIE Monkey in the middle playing on a fiddle.

GILBERT Josie, give me my hat!

JOSIE *(throws hat to RUBY)* Ruby!

RUBY *(catches hat)* Oh, Gilbert!

RUBY *(throws hat to JOSIE)* Josie.

JOSIE *(catches hat)* Monkey in the middle.

GILBERT Josie, give my hat and I'll give you a smooch.

JOSIE gives GILBERT the hat. Waits for her kiss.

GILBERT I'd rather kiss a ... a tommy cod.

JOSIE Oh, Gilbert!

RUBY and JOSIE see DIANA and break away from the game, running up to them.

JOSIE You're Anne, aren't you?

ANNE That's right, I am.

RUBY I'm Ruby. And that's Josie. We're classmates. Do you sing?

ANNE Well I...

RUBY Because we have concerts on Fridays.

ANNE Oh, that is grand. I do love to vocalize.

JOSIE Good , they say "music hath charms to soothe the savage beast." (*the girls giggle*)

RUBY Oh Josie, you are such a pest. She's just saying that because we know you had that terrible blowout with Mrs. Lynde and that is why you had to apologize to her that day we all saw you at the start of the summer.

ANNE Well, I did lose my temper with her, but I haven't lost my temper ever since and I don't suppose I ever will again. Do you sing, Josie?

JOSIE No, I hate singing.

RUBY You hate everything, Josie. Anyway, Anne, pleased to meet you, I'm sure.

ANNE And I'm honoured to meet you.

She solemnly shakes hands with RUBY. JOSIE snickers. GILBERT catches ANNE's eye and winks. She looks away.

ANNE Who is that rude boy?

JOSIE That's Gilbert Blythe.

DIANA Don't you think Gilbert's handsome?

ANNE I think your Gilbert Blythe is handsome but I think he's very bold. It isn't good manners to wink at a strange girl.

She looks at GILBERT. He winks. She looks away. He crosses to her.

GILBERT Hi there.

He offers his hand and ANNE is about to take it when he pulls her braids.

GILBERT Carrots!

ANNE You mean, hateful boy! How dare you!

ANNE cracks her slate over GILBERT's head.

GIRLS Oh!

ANNE This is the end of all things.

End of Act One.

Act Two, Scene One

Green Gables / In Front of RACHEL's House. RACHEL, DIANA and JOSIE stand talking in front of RACHEL's. Simultaneously we see ANNE rush into the house. ANNE pulls a vial of something out of her pocket. She looks at the instructions.

DIANA I told her, "You mustn't mind Gilbert making fun of your hair."

JOSIE Why, he makes fun of all the girls.

DIANA I told her that. I said, "He calls me a crow because my hair is so black."

RUBY And what did she say?

DIANA "There's a great deal of difference between being called a crow and being called carrots."

ANNE puts on an apron, pours hot water into a basin, adds the contents of the vial and carries the basin upstairs.

RUBY Gilbert whispered to her and handed her something in class, didn't he?

DIANA Uh huh.

RUBY What did he say?

DIANA He said he was sorry and, "Don't be mad for keeps".

JOSIE But what did he give her?

DIANA A "Love Heart".

- JOSIE A "Love Heart".
- DIANA That's right and it said, "You are sweet."
- RUBY Oh, I could never resist Gilbert Blythe.
- JOSIE What did she do then?
- DIANA She dropped the candy on the ground and stepped on it.
- JOSIE
& RUBY Oh!!!
- DIANA She said "Gilbert Blythe has hurt my feelings excruciatingly and I shall never speak to him again."
- JOSIE Well, I must say I admire her strength.
- RUBY I could never resist Gilbert Blythe.
- DIANA She told me, "The iron has entered my soul".

Offstage, ANNE is looking at the results of her handiwork. We hear a series of gasps building to a horrified scream.

Act Two, Scene Two

Green Gables.

The kitchen is empty. Low light. MARILLA enters.

MARILLA Anne! You've let the fire go out and tea was to be ready at five o'clock! Matthew will be home soon and there's nothing for him!

MARILLA grimly starts to make tea.

MARILLA Gadding off somewhere with Diana Barry, I suppose, and never thinking once about the time or her duties. Matthew's tea will be late.

ANNE appears, hiding in the shadows with a towel over her head.

ANNE I'm sorry, Marilla and I would have made tea, but...

MARILLA Anne? What's the matter?

MARILLA moves towards ANNE.

ANNE I'm in the depths of despair and I don't suppose I'll ever go to school again.

MARILLA Anne Shirley, come into this room this minute and tell me. This minute, I say.

ANNE steps into the light. Her hair is green.

MARILLA Anne Shirley, what have you done to your hair? Why, it's GREEN!

ANNE I thought nothing could be as bad as red hair. But now I know it's ten times worse to have

green hair. Oh, Marilla, you little know how utterly wretched I am.

MARILLA I little know how you got into this fix, but I mean to find out. Just what have you done to your hair?

ANNE I dyed it.

MARILLA Dyed your hair green?

ANNE I didn't mean to dye it green, Marilla. The bottle said it would turn my hair a beautiful raven black.

MARILLA Anne Shirley, didn't you know dyeing your hair was a wicked thing to do?

ANNE Oh, Marilla, when I saw the dreadful colour it turned my hair, I knew it was, I can tell you. And I've been repenting ever since.

MARILLA Well, I hope you'll repent to good purpose and that you've got your eyes opened to where your vanity has led you.

Examining ANNE's hair.

ANNIE Oh, Marilla, I can never live this down. People will think I am not respectable. And how Josie Pye will laugh! Marilla, I *cannot* face Josie Pye. I am the unhappiest girl in Prince Edward Island. What shall I do?

MARILLA That is fast dye if ever there was any. Your hair must be cut off. There is no other way. You can't go out with it looking like that.

MARILLA gets the scissors and hands them to ANNE who holds them point up like a sacrificial dagger.

ANNIE The girls in books lose their hair in fevers or sell it to get money for some good deed, not

because they've dyed it green. I'm going to weep all the time you're cutting it off, if it won't interfere.

ANNE leads MARILLA off, scissors held high.

I never thought I was vain about my hair, of all things, but now I know I was, in spite of its being red, because it was so long and thick and curly. I expect something will happen to my nose next.

They exit. Musical bridge to next scene.

Act Two, Scene Three

The School.

JOSIE comes on with a note in her hand. She looks around and then tacks it up on the school house door. She runs off. GILBERT walks on, sees the notice and pulls it off the door.

GILBERT "Take Notice, Gilbert and Josie". Josie! Josie Pye!

He crumples it up and exits.

Act Two, Scene Four

Green Gables.

The older DIANA, RUBY, RACHEL, and MATTHEW all sit in the parlour laughing as they tell stories.

RACHEL She told Marilla, "I'll never, never look at myself again until my hair grows." Then she said,

RACHEL
DIANA
& RUBY

"Yes, I will, too!"

RACHEL "I'll do penance for being wicked that way. I'll look at myself every day and see how ugly I am. And I won't try to imagine it away, either."

- RUBY And Marilla had to let her stay at home until it grew in! Didn't you Marilla?
- MARILLA *(enters the parlour with a fresh tray of sweets)*
Well, mercy, I couldn't let her out looking like a badly shorn, shamrock-shaded sheep, could I?
- RACHEL What a girl she was for making mistakes! Always getting into scrapes.
- MARILLA And she'd would always insist, "I must be improving because I must be running out of new mistakes to make."
- MATTHEW She did suffer terrible over her hair and freckles. Didn't you, Anne!
- ANNE *(enters)* I certainly did, but my freckles are finally gone, and people are nice enough to tell me my hair is auburn now.
- DIANA Except for yesterday — Josie Pye told her she thought it's redder than ever and asked if people who have red hair ever really get used to having it.
- MARILLA Now, isn't that just perfect Pye.
- ANNE I've made what I would once have called a heroic effort to like her, but Josie Pye just won't be liked. And I believe I've known that since the first day we ever met.
- RACHEL Now Anne, Josie is a Pye, so she can't help being disagreeable.
- MARILLA I suppose people of that kind serve some useful purpose in society, but I must say I don't know what it is any more than I know the use of thistles.
- RACHEL Ruby, did you hear anything in Charlottetown about the Abbey Bank?

RUBY I heard it was shaky. Why?

RACHEL Because Marilla and Matthew have all their savings in that bank — every penny. If the bank fails, they'll be ruined.

MATTHEW Old Mr. Abbey was a great friend of father's. A bank with him at the head of it was good enough for anybody.

RACHEL He is a very old man — his nephews are really at the head of the institution. You should get them to draw their money out of there, Anne, right now.

MATTHEW Well now, Rachel, I read in the paper just yesterday that the bank was all right.

RACHEL There's no talking to you, Matthew Cuthbert, and there never has been.

MATTHEW That may be true, but a man's got a right to manage his affairs without the neighbours meddling. (*embarrassed by his outburst*) Ah, I best see to that broken fence in the meadow. Morning's half gone.

MATTHEW exits rubbing his left arm — heart pain.

DIANA Ah, well... we should be off too, I suppose.

RACHEL Yes, I've promised Ruby's mother a visit for lunch.

RACHEL stands to go. RUBY and DIANA follow suit.

RUBY Thank you for tea, Marilla. See you soon, Anne. (*going off*) Diana, have you heard that Mr. Brown, that handsome teacher from the school at White Sands...

RACHEL ...has resigned! And we'll say no more about that!

ANNE talks softly to MARILLA.

ANNE Marilla, is Matthew quite well?

MARILLA He's had some bad spells with his heart this spring. I've been real worried about him, but he won't spare himself a mite.

ANNE We have to get him to rest.

MARILLA Maybe he will pick up now you're home. You always cheer him up.

ANNE You are not looking as well yourself as I'd like to see you, Marilla.

MARILLA Oh, I'm fine.

ANNE No, you look tired. It's your headaches. Are they getting worse?

MARILLA It's nothing new, and nothing for you to worry about. *(changing the subject)* You were right surprised to hear Gilbert Blythe was going to teach, weren't you?

ANNE Yes. I confess I was. I still don't know what to think about him not going on.

MARILLA Oh, the rivalry between you two! *(laughs)* And what a nice-looking fellow he is. You know, people used to call Gilbert's father my beau.

ANNE Oh, Marilla — and what happened?

MARILLA We had a quarrel. I wouldn't forgive him when he asked me to. I meant to, later on, but I was sulky and angry and I wanted to punish him first. He never came back. *(pause)* You know, I've always kind of wished I'd forgiven him when I had the chance.

Act Two, Scene Five

A small landing on the stream leading to the Lake of Shining Waters. DIANA, JOSIE and RUBY stand beside a small boat in "dress up" versions of medieval garb.

- RUBY He's sweet on her. There is no doubt about it whatsoever.
- JOSIE Ruby Gillis, you are the stupidest girl in all of Avonlea. Gilbert Blythe and Anne Shirley are the biggest of rivals.
- DIANA It's true. Anne has vowed eternal enmity to Gilbert Blythe.
- RUBY I didn't say *she* liked him. I said *he* was sweet on her.
- DIANA The stream's right high for the fall, isn't it?
- JOSIE All the better. It's more dramatic. (*to RUBY*) Then who wrote Gilbert and me up at school?
- RUBY I thought you did that yourself, Josie — same as last time.
- JOSIE You are a hateful little child, Ruby Gillis. Absolutely hateful.
- DIANA I could never resist Gilbert — ever. The boat's leaky, but I bailed it out so it should be fine.
- RUBY Rachel Lynde says Gilbert and Anne are a match made in heaven because Gilbert is the only boy in school smart enough to keep up with her.

JOSIE Well, being smart isn't everything, you know. And Gilbert Blythe isn't the sort of fellow to get himself involved with some... some... bad-tempered orphan.

DIANA Josie Pye, don't you dare say that about Anne!

JOSIE Well it's true. You both fawn over her since she started The Story Club but that's just because she's the only one with the imagination to think up a story and I don't suppose that's so hard to do when you're brought up in an orphanage where they teach you to lie.

DIANA You take that back or I'll...

ANNE enters dressed in a knight's cape with a wooden spoon sword.

ANNE Good 'morrow, fair maidens!

RUBY Shuss... here she comes.

JOSIE Why Anne, we were just talking about you!

ANNE You were?

JOSIE Yes. It was such a good idea to act out "Elaine." We're all so terribly excited about it.

RUBY It will be so much fun.

ANNE It will be, won't it! But, first we must call The Story Club to order. Diana, I believe you are the current secretary?

DIANA You are hateful, Josie Pye and I hereby call this meeting of The Story Club opened. Anne Shirley, The Story Girl, in the Chair.

ANNE Thank you, Diana. The only business before The Story Club this week concerns a motion made last week that at our next meeting, we

would enact the tragic tale of "Elaine of Camelot". I open the floor to discussion.

RUBY Good. Who's going to play Elaine?

DIANA I think it should be...

JOSIE No Diana, I can't. Of course, it would be romantic to do it but I know I'd be popping up every minute or so to see where I was and that would spoil the effect.

JOSIE gets in the boat.

DIANA I was going to say Anne is the only one of us with the imagination to play Elaine.

ANNE Oh no, I couldn't be Elaine, it's ridiculous. Ruby ought to do it because she has such lovely long golden hair.

RUBY Oh no, Anne, I couldn't. I don't mind floating down when there's two or three of us in the boat and we can sit up. It's fun then. But to lie down and pretend I was dead — I'd die of fright.

ANNE But a red-haired person cannot play Elaine. Bright red hair is just too unattractive!

DIANA But your hair is ever so much darker than it used to be before you cut it.

ANNE Oh, do you really think so? I've sometimes thought it was myself — but I never dared to ask anyone for fear she would tell me it wasn't. Do you think it could be called auburn now, Diana?

DIANA Yes, and I think it is real pretty.

ANNE All right then, it's settled. I shall be Elaine.

JOSIE What?

ANNE looks at the boat.

ANNE Is this boat quite sound?

JOSIE No, it leaks.

DIANA It leaks some, but not all that much. And you can bail if you need to.

ANNE *(whispers)* You do know that I don't swim, don't you, Diana?

JOSIE Well if you're scared...

ANNE I'm not scared.

JOSIE Scaredy cat! Scaredy cat!

ANNE I'm not scared. And I'll prove it.

JOSIE OK then, prove it.

ANNE Very well, I shall.

JOSIE jumps out. ANNE jumps in, laying down and folding her hands over her breast.

DIANA Oh, she does look really dead.

RUBY It makes me feel frightened. Do you suppose it's really right to act like this? Mrs. Lynde says that all play-acting is abominably wicked.

ANNE Ruby, you shouldn't talk about Mrs. Lynde. It spoils the effect because this is hundreds of years before Mrs. Lynde was born.

JOSIE Shuss. It's silly for Elaine to be talking when she's dead.

ANNE lays back, pretending to be dead.

JOSIE Good, now we will begin. We must kiss her quiet brow and you say, "Sister, farewell forever. Farewell, sweet sister." Both of you — as sorrowfully as you possibly can.

They kiss her brow.

DIANA Sister, farewell forever. Farewell, sweet sister...

RUBY Sister, farewell forever. Farewell... Oh... I can't...

JOSIE Oh, just push the boat off.

DIANA We'll meet you below the bridge.

They push off the boat. JOSIE stands with the oars. The girls sing a fragment of The Song of Love and Death, from Tennyson's "Idylls of The King". ANNE drifts downstream.

TRIO Sweet is true love though given in vain, in vain
And sweet is death who puts end to pain
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

ANNE drifts along enjoying the romance of her situation and singing with the girls, but then she sits up, pulls a soaking edge of the shawl out of the boat and wrings it out.

ANNE I'm leaking. No, I'm sinking! Where are the oars? (*kneels and prays*) Dear God, please take me close to a piling on the bridge and I'll do the rest. Dear God, please take me close to a piling and I'll do the rest. Dear God, please take me close to a piling and I'll do the rest.

Finally the boat drifts close enough to the bridge for ANNE to leap to a piling. She clings to the piling.

ANNE Sweet is true love though given in vain, in
 vain
 And sweet is death who puts end to pain

*GILBERT, who has been fishing nearby,
comes swaggering up.*

GILBERT Anne Shirley! What in the world are you
 doing?

ANNE We were re-enacting "Elaine of Camelot" and I
 was playing Elaine so had to drift down to
 Camelot in a funeral barge. But it started to
 sink.

GILBERT So, you had to float to Camelot in a leaky
 boat?

ANNE I did not expect it to sink, Gilbert.

GILBERT No, I suppose not. Well, come on take my
 hand!

ANNE I am expecting help at any moment.

GILBERT Don't be silly, Anne. Take my hand and jump.

*Without waiting for an answer he extends his
hand. ANNE, clinging to GILBERT Blythe's
hand, jumps to shore twisting her ankle.*

ANNE Ow!!!

GILBERT Are you all right?

ANNE Fine. I've twisted my ankle is all.

GILBERT Are you sure?

ANNE Positive. Thank you for your assistance, Mr.
 Blythe.

GILBERT You're welcome... Anne, look here. Can't we be
 good friends? I'm awfully sorry I made fun of

your hair that time. I didn't mean to vex you and I only meant it for a joke. Besides, it's so long ago. I think your hair is awfully pretty now — honest I do. (*offers her hand*) Let's be friends

ANNE Oh, Gilbert, I... Gilbert, you called me "carrots".

GILBERT I know but—

ANNE You disgraced me in front of the whole school.

GILBERT It was just a—

ANNE On my first day!

GILBERT I was just being friendly, Anne. The other girls like to be teased.

ANNE Well, I am not "other girls".

GILBERT But Anne—

ANNE No, I shall never be friends with you, Gilbert Blythe. I don't want to be!

GILBERT All right! I'll never ask you to be friends again, Anne Shirley. I don't care either!

The girls come rushing up.

DIANA Gilbert, Gilbert we saw the boat drifting, swamped and we thought....

Anne, we thought you were drowned.

RUBY And we felt like murderers because we had made you be Elaine.

JOSIE Yes, how did you escape?

ANNE I... I managed to jump on to a bridge piling and... Gilbert, he...

RUBY Gilbert saved you!

DIANA Oh, Gilbert, how splendid of you!

RUBY Why, it's so romantic!

JOSIE I suppose she'll have to speak to you now.

ANNE I won't, and I don't want ever to hear the word
'romantic' again.

*ANNE stamps her foot. Her ankle gives out.
She yelps in pain and faints. As she falls
GILBERT sweeps her into his arms.*

DIANA She's fainted!

RUBY Oh, Gilbert.

GILBERT It will be all right. She's just twisted her
ankle. I'll carry her home.

GILBERT carries ANNE off.

RUBY (to JOSIE) Told you so. It's love.

*JOSIE exits. RUBY and DIANA begin to sing
the song again, as they clear the stage.*

RUBY
& DIANA Sweet is true love though given in vain, in
vain
And sweet is death who puts end to pain
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

Act Two, Scene Six

Green Gables.

Lights up on the parlour. JOSIE sits at the organ (or piano) playing The Island Hymn and trying to make the lyrics fit the tune.

JOSIE *(sings)* Fair Island of the sea,
We raise our song to thee,
The bright and blest
(losing the scansion) Loyal now we stand

These words just don't fit the song, Anne.

ANNE *(in the kitchen)* They do!

JOSIE As brothers, hand in hand,
And sing God save the land
(losing the scansion) We love the best

They don't, and I've been singing this song
with the real words since I was a mere child,
so I should know.

ANNE enters the parlour.

ANNE *(sings so it works)* "We love the best." You just
need to practice.

JOSIE Well, I'm certainly not going to make a fool of
myself trying to sing these words this
afternoon, just because you wrote them.

ANNE Oh, I guess you're right. It would sound awful.

*RUBY, DIANA enter dressed in their "good"
outfits, trying to act like adults.*

RUBY
& DIANA

(outside) Miss Shirley!

*ANNE limps eagerly to greet her friends,
shares an excited squeal with them and leads
them into the parlour area..*

RUBY

Anne. How is your ankle?

ANNE

Very nearly healed, thank you. Marilla says she'll let me go back to school next week.

DIANE

It was very kind of you to invite us to tea.

ANNE

Oh Diana, isn't it exciting! When Marilla told me that I could invite The Story Club to tea all by myself while she went to Ladies Aid, I thought, "How perfectly lovely!" And your mothers let you come! I mean, it proves we're practically grown up! (pause) I even asked her if we could use the rosebud spray tea set.

RUBY

The rosebud tea set!

ANNE

She said it was used only for special occasions and I said this was a very special occasion for me and she said her only concern was that the whole event might make me more addle-pated than ever. But she gave us the brown tea set which I believe is even prettier than the rosebud and she said we can have fruitcake and cookies and snaps and...

JOSIE

It isn't good manners to tell your company what you are going to give them to eat.

ANNE

Thank you Josie, you're right. So I won't tell you what she said we could have to drink. Only it begins with an R and a C and it's a bright red colour. I love bright red drinks, don't you?

DIANA

Oh, yes, they taste twice as good as any other colour.

ANNE At least twice as good. I'm sure you will enjoy it.

JOSIE Enjoy what?

ANNE Sorry, it would be bad manners to tell.

RUBY Oh do tell us, Anne. I hate secrets.

ANNE It's raspberry cordial! Marilla's famous raspberry cordial.

ANNE limps out of the room.

JOSIE Raspberry cordial. It's as if she's never had raspberry cordial before. My mother serves it daily.

DIANA Josie! You are not being a very good guest.

JOSIE Well, I beg your pardon. I will try and do better.

ANNE returns carrying a tray with a bottle and glasses and pours drinks.

ANNE Now, please help yourself. I won't have any just now as I have so much to do to get tea prepared.

DIANA looks at its bright-red hue admiringly, and then sips it daintily. JOSIE and RUBY both take sips as well.

DIANA That's really nice raspberry cordial, Anne.

JOSIE Oh yes, I didn't know raspberry cordial could taste so good.

ANNE I'm really glad you like it. Drink as much as you like.

ANNE hurries out. JOSIE sniffs the drink knowingly.

RUBY This doesn't taste like raspberry cordial at all.

JOSIE Now, now Ruby we mustn't be bad guests. We'll just have to pretend we like it, won't we, Diana?

DIANA I think it's delicious.

JOSIE Of course you do.

ANNE re-enters with the tea and puts it down.

ANNE It will just take a moment to steep.

JOSIE There's no rush, not with this delicious cordial at hand. Diana just loves it, don't you, Diana?

DIANA It's the best I've ever had.

She takes a long drink. A pause.

ANNE So, Diana? How is your mother?

DIANA She is very well, thank you. I hope your father's potato crop is good too, Josie.

JOSIE It is fairly good, thank you.

ANNE How are things at school?

DIANA Without you? Awful.

JOSIE Diana is sitting with me now.

DIANA Yes, and you squeak the chalk all the time.

RUBY She does it on purpose too!

JOSIE Doesn't that just make your blood run cold.

DIANA Everybody misses you so and wishes you'd come to school again soon, Anne.

RUBY Even Gilbert Blythe.

ANNE I won't hear a word about Gilbert Blythe.

DIANA But Anne, Gilbert just wants to make it up with you.

ANNE Diana!

DIANA, a bit intimidated by ANNE's reaction to her comments, takes the bottle from JOSIE and fills her tumbler again.

DIANA This is the nicest stuff I ever drank. It's ever so much nicer than Mrs. Lynde's, although she brags of hers so much.

ANNE Marilla is a superior cook.

JOSIE I'm sure. Is she teaching you?

ANNE She is trying but, I assure you, it is uphill work. There's so little scope for imagination in cookery.

DIANA You just have to go by rules.

ANNE Exactly. The last time I made a cake I forgot to put the flour in. I was thinking the loveliest story about you and me, Diana. You were desperately ill with smallpox and everybody deserted you.

DIANA takes another drink.

RUBY Then what happened?

ANNE I went boldly to her bedside and nursed her back to life and then I took the smallpox and died and Diana planted a rosebush by my grave and watered it with her tears and she never, never forgot the friend of her youth who sacrificed her life for her.

DIANA Oh, Anne.

ANNE It was such a pathetic tale that the tears just rained down over my cheeks while I mixed the cake, so, I forgot the flour and the cake was a dismal failure.

DIANA Flour is so essential to cakes, you know.

ANNE So I have learned. Why, Diana, what is the matter?"

DIANA suddenly stands unsteadily.

DIANA I'm — I'm awful sick, I--I--must go right home.

JOSIE I never heard of company going home without tea.

ANNE Oh, you mustn't dream of going home without your tea!

*ANNE rushes to get the tea tray. She returns.
It is laden with sweets*

RUBY Where do you feel bad Diana?

DIANA I'm awful dizzy and... and...

ANNE (*putting the tray right under DIANA's nose*) Let me give you a bit of fruitcake and some of the cherry preserves.

*DIANA covers her mouth and runs out.
ANNE follows. RUBY follows last.*

ANNE (*off*) Oh, Diana!

JOSIE What a pity.

*JOSIE goes to the piano and begins to play
ANNE's song. RUBY enters looking pale.*

JOSIE Listen Ruby, Anne has written a song
 especially for the occasion. It's sheer poetry.

Fair Island of the sea,
We raise our song to thee,
The bright and blest...

RUBY You are evil, Josie Pye.

JOSIE More cordial, Ruby?

Musical bridge to next scene.

Act Two, Scene Seven

Green Gables.

ANNE is carefully pinning the amethyst brooch on MARILLA.

ANNE It's been three whole months and Mrs. Barry still won't forgive me?

MARILLA I'm sorry, Anne. If I told her once, I've told her a hundred times it was all my fault.

ANNE I didn't know you had put out your homemade currant wine.

MARILLA It was a mistake. But that doesn't change the fact that Diana came home dead drunk. Mrs. Barry does not approve of my homemade currant wine under any circumstances.

ANNE Diana will be all alone with Minnie Mae tonight and I should be staying with her. I really should and... I'm just overcome with woe. Mrs Barry is never, never going to let Diana play with me again.

MARILLA I'm sorry, Anne...

ANNE It's all right, Marilla I have learned from sad experience that sometimes tragedy cannot be avoided but Diana will be in my heart forever. She has sent me a lock of her hair and the most beautiful letter. Please see that they are buried with me, for I don't believe I'll live very long. Perhaps, when she sees me lying cold and dead before her, Mrs. Barry will let Diana come to my funeral.

MARILLA I don't think there is much fear of your dying of grief, Anne, as long as you can talk.

Sleigh bells approaching. MARILLA looks out the window.

MARILLA Well, there's Rachel. Best get on my coat.

ANNE (*a beat*) It seems like all of Avonlea is going to the rally.

MARILLA I shouldn't be surprised. This is the first time a Prime Minister has been down this way in winter since Sir John A. MacDonald himself and entertainment is terrible scarce in January. You and Matthew will be all right on your own, won't you, Anne?

ANNE Yes, I am looking forward to a horribly dull night with my geometry book. (*sigh*) But all I really want to do is read Diana's last letter again and again. She used 'thee' and 'thou' all through that letter, Marilla. It was... heartbreaking.

MARILLA Now, don't you worry about that Mrs. Barry, Anne, she'll come around eventually.

ANNE Do you really think so, Marilla?

MARILLA I know so. Why the Barrys are a far too Christian a family to hold a grudge more than three or four years.

ANNE groans as MARILLA exits.

Act Two, Scene Eight

The Barry Kitchen.

A strong winter wind is blowing, and on it the hint of something else, the gasping breath of a sick little girl. The coughing gets louder. A baby's crib sits in the corner near the fire. DIANA stands in the window waving a candle.

DIANA Three flashes. Three flashes, "come immediately — emergency". Please Anne, please come. (*putting down the candle she comforts the baby*) There, there, Minnie Mae. It will be all right. It's warmer in here and... and help is coming.

ANNE (*rushes in*) Diana! What's the matter.

DIANA (*off*) Oh, Anne, Minnie Mae is sick, awful bad and... I know I'm forbidden to see you, Anne, but I'm all alone with her and... Anne, I'm so ascared!

ANNE Let me see her.

ANNE looks in the cradle.

DIANA She can't breathe, Anne. Is it the croup?

ANNE It's the croup, all right.

DIANA I think she's dying!

ANNE Do you have any ipecac?

DIANA I don't know.

ANNE Where do you keep your medicine?

DIANA In the pantry.

ANNE disappears into the pantry. DIANA is close to panic.

DIANA She sounds awful bad, Anne. I had a cousin come down with the croup when she was three and my mother said she was dead before the night was out. "She just coughed out her little soul", that's what my mother said. "And there was nothing anybody could do."

ANNE Stop it, Diana. Put on your coat and run to Green Gables. Tell Matthew he must go get a doctor.

DIANA He won't find a doctor. I know. Doctor Blair said he was going to town.

ANNE He will find a doctor even if he has to drive to Carmody. Hurry.

DIANA exits. ANNE goes to the cradle and gently spoons some medicine into Minnie Mae. The baby coughs and cries.

ANNE I know, Minnie. I know — it tastes awful, but you've got to drink it all, every last drop.

The coughing gets worse. ANNE forces another spoonful down.

ANNE Oh Minnie, please, please take your medicine. You're sicker than the Hammond twins ever were and this is all I know how to do. I'm afraid too, Minnie.

ANNE administers another dose and picks her up.

ANNE There, there now. There, there.

ANNE paces with the baby as the crying and coughing build and then stop dead.

Act Two, Scene Nine

Green Gables.

MARILLA and MATTHEW sit in the kitchen with DIANA.

JOSIE *(off)* Hello! Anybody home?

RUBY and JOSIE rush in.

RUBY Mrs. Lynde just told us the news! Is it true, Diana?

MARILLA Shuss, Anne's still sleeping.

DIANA *(whispered)* It is true. Anne saved Minnie Mae. She saved her, didn't she, Matthew?

MATTHEW *(whispered)* Yup. The doctor, he told Mr. and Mrs. Barry... *(shyness overtakes him)* Well, he said... ah...

MARILLA *(whispered)* He said, "That little redheaded girl they have over at Cuthbert's is as smart as they make 'em. I tell you she saved that baby's life."

MATTHEW *(whispered)* It would have been too late by the time I found the Doc and got him over to Orchard Slope. That's what he said! Ain't she something?

DIANA *(whispered)* Mother says we can never repay Anne and we are to be good friends again. *(offering a card to RUBY for inspection)* I made a card too.

RUBY *(whispered)* "If you love me as I love you
Nothing but death can part us two."

Oh, I think I'm going to cry.

*JOSIE makes a face and hands her a hanky.
ANNE enters, yawning.*

ANNE Good morning. What time is it?

MATTHEW 'Bout noon, I guess.

Realizing her friends are in the room.

ANNE Ruby, Josie... Diana?

DIANA Mother sent me to thank you. All is forgiven.

RUBY It's all over town, Anne. Saving Minnie Mae!
You're, you're... like... like Florence Nightingale!

ANNE I'm just lucky Mrs. Hammond had three pairs
of twins after all. If she hadn't, I mightn't
have known what to do. Oh Diana, do you
think the teacher will let us sit together in
school again?

DIANA I do. *(to JOSIE)* My mother said she must.

JOSIE Of course she must, don't worry about your
other friends. I'll just sit with Mary Andrews
and hope I don't get warts.

DIANA Mother says she's going to host an elegant
party when we graduate and you will be the
guest of honour. It will be an elegant tea with
our very best china set out.

ANNE Nobody ever used their very best china on my
account before.

DIANA Well, we will and we'll have fruit cake and
pound cake and doughnuts and two kinds of
preserves and everyone will wear their most

elegant gowns, too. Now, Mother wants you to come over and see her so she can thank you personally.

ANNE May I, Marilla?

MARILLA Of course. Go along.

ANNE You see before you a perfectly happy person, Marilla. I'm perfectly happy — yes, in spite of my red hair. Just at present I have a soul above red hair.

The girls dream of their gowns as they exit.

RUBY Oh, Josie, a garden party! I know just what I'm going to wear. White organdy. We've got a brand new shipment of dress material in at the store and...

JOSIE Organdy. That is elegant, Ruby but you'll still have to make it yourself. My father is having a graduation gown made especially for me by the best dressmakers in Charlottetown. In pink damask.

MATTHEW sits and thinks for a second and then gets out his pipe. MARILLA looks at him and scowls.

MARILLA You're going to smoke.

MATTHEW grunts and packs in some tobacco, eventually lighting up. MARILLA opens the windows.

MARILLA Well then, what is it you're trying to figure out this time?

MATTHEW Marilla, there is something different about Anne.

MARILLA Different?

MATTHEW From the other girls. Not just that she's prettier either. Something else. I just can't make out what. *(pause)* You know, I suspect that Anne is not dressed like the other girls. *(pause)* In fact, the more I think on it, I'm sure she isn't. Never since she come to Green Gables.

MARILLA Anne is dressed very respectably.

MATTHEW Well now, I don't know. It's her... sleeves I think. Her sleeves don't look at all like the sleeves the other girls wear. And her dresses are all black and brown. Why do you keep her so plain, Marilla?

MARILLA She always has three good, warm, serviceable dresses. Anything more would just pamper her vanity, Matthew, and she's as vain as a peacock now.

MATTHEW Of course, you know best. But in less than six months she'll be graduating school. It would do no harm to give the child one pretty dress, something like Diana Barry always wears, would it?

MARILLA With big puffed sleeves that take almost as much material as a dress itself to make. It would be nothing but extravagance.

MATTHEW I don't know about that. I don't.

Musical bridge.

Act Two, Scene Ten

The Store.

RUBY enters in an apron and sets up the Avonlea General store. As she sets up, JOSIE and DIANA cross the stage together, talking.

- JOSIE Well, I think it's just terrible that your mother won't let you write the entrance examinations for Queen's. You're the only one of our whole set who's not studying for them.
- DIANA I know, it's terrible. Anne is bound to go as she's at the top of the class.
- JOSIE Except for Gilbert.
- DIANA Along with Gilbert. You know Ruby says Anne is going to be elected class valedictorian at commencement.
- JOSIE Yes, I suppose she should be — you can't ever get her to be quiet, anyway. Why won't your mother let you come, Diana?
- DIANA Mother says education is wasted on a girl as our proper sphere is marriage and the home.
- JOSIE Well, of course she's right, but that's all the more reason to go to Queen's.
- DIANA It is?
- JOSIE I should say so! Why, the only eligible bachelor in all of Avonlea is Gilbert Blythe and he's going to Queen's for sure. Who does your mother think you'll find to wed 'round here? Moody Spurgeon?

DIANA (*DIANA shrieks*) Josie, you are a... a torturing demon!

JOSIE Diana and Moody sitting in a tree K-I-S-S-I-N-G!

DIANA screams again and runs off, followed by JOSIE. They run past MATTHEW, who looks at them nervously and then approaches the store counter.

Act Two, Scene Eleven

The Store.

RUBY What can I do for you this evening, Mr. Cuthbert?

MATTHEW Have you any ... any ... any... well now, say, any garden rakes?

RUBY Well now, we don't get much call for garden rakes this early in the year, but I believe we have one or two left over from the fall. I'll go and see.

MATTHEW talks to himself, rehearsing what he has to say. RUBY returns with the rake.

RUBY Here you are, Mr. Cuthbert. Anything else tonight?

MATTHEW Well now, since you suggest it, I might as well, take, that is, look at... buy some... some hayseed.

RUBY We don't get the hayseed until closer to planting.

MATTHEW Oh, certainly, certainly. Just as you say.

MATTHEW grabs the rake and heads for the door. At the threshold he remembers he hasn't paid for it and turns miserably back.

MATTHEW Now, how much would the rake be?

RUBY Fifty cents.

He gives her a dollar and while she is counting out his change he rallies his powers

for a final desperate attempt.

MATTHEW Well now, if it isn't too much trouble... I might as well— that is, I'd like to look at... at some sugar.

RUBY White or brown?

MATTHEW Oh, well now ... brown. I'll ... I'll take twenty pounds.

As RUBY is getting the sugar, RACHEL enters. She is surprised to see him.

RACHEL Matthew Cuthbert, what are you doing here?

MATTHEW Ah... brown sugar?

RACHEL Brown sugar!

RUBY Twenty pounds.

RACHEL Twenty pounds! Whatever possessed you to get so much? Marilla never uses it except for porridge or black fruit cake.

MATTHEW I... I thought it might come in handy, sometime. And the rake... I... well now... You see, what I really want to do is...

He leans in and whispers in RACHEL's ear.

RACHEL A dress for Anne?

MATTHEW cringes and nods.

RACHEL Have you something particular in mind?

MATTHEW Na... na...

RACHEL No? Well, Ruby I believe a nice rich brown would just suit Anne, what do you think?

MATTHEW Na... na... not brown. Something colorful...
ma... maybe with flowers.

RUBY We have some new Gloria in that's real
pretty. How's this, Mr. Cuthbert?

She shows the fabric. MATTHEW nods.

MATTHEW It's for the spring, you see, and... and... well,
how many months does it take to make a
pretty dress, anyway?

RACHEL Why no time at all. I'll make it up for her,
seeing that if Marilla was to make it, Anne
would probably get wind of it before the time
and spoil the surprise.

*MATTHEW makes a feeble attempt at polite
protest.*

RACHEL No, it isn't a mite of trouble. I like sewing.

MATTHEW Well now, I'm much obliged and.. .and... I
dunno... but I'd like... I think they make the
sleeves different nowadays to what they used
to be. If it wouldn't be asking too much I— I'd
like them made in the new way.

RACHEL Puffs? Of course. You needn't worry a speck
more about it, Matthew. I'll make it up in the
very latest fashion.

MATTHEW Well now... that... would be... Much obliged.

*He hurries out of the store, leaving his brown
sugar.*

RACHEL I believe that man is waking up after being
asleep for over sixty years.

*RUBY and RACHEL laugh. RACHEL runs
after MATTHEW with the rake.*

RACHEL Matthew, your rake.

Act Two, Scene Twelve

Green Gables.

ANNE and MARILLA are in the kitchen.

MARILLA is in her best dress and is wearing her brooch. ANNE is in her best dress too, severe as ever, and is looking in a hand mirror while MARILLA brushes her hair.

ANNE I am so nervous. I mean, Marilla, "class valedictorian". I don't know if I can stand in front of everybody and... speak.

MARILLA You've been practicing since late April, Anne.

ANNE Yes, I think I can manage the speech, but there will be singing, Marilla. What if I sing off-key and Gil... some of the boys make fun of me for it or...

MATTHEW enters with a box under his arm.

MATTHEW He wouldn't dare laugh at the prettiest girl at graduation.

ANNE Oh Matthew, you are so gallant to say so, but that's impossible. After all, with my red hair and freckles and... Josie Pye has had a dress made for her of pink damask that is so beautiful, I feel sure we will all be lost in her radiance.

MATTHEW sheepishly unfolds the dress from its paper swathing and holds it out with a deprecatory glance.

MATTHEW Well, we'll just see about that.

ANNE Why... why, Matthew, is that for me? Oh, Matthew!

ANNE holds up the dress.

MARILLA Well, I hope you'll be satisfied at last, Anne. There's enough material in those sleeves alone to make a waist, I declare there is.

ANNE It's beautiful, Marilla. I simply cannot breathe another breath until I have tried on this dress.

ANNE rushes upstairs to try on the dress.

MARILLA So this is what you have been looking so mysterious and grinning about is it? I knew you were up to some foolishness.

MATTHEW Well, now I guess that there dress is about as far from foolish as an old fool can be.

MARILLA The puffs have been getting bigger and more ridiculous right along — they're as big as balloons now. Next year anybody who wears them will have to go through a door sideways.

MATTHEW Well now, I'm not so concerned about that as I am with Anne feeling like a queen. Think of it Marilla, seems like just yesterday I first set eyes on that gangling little wisp of misery and hope sitting there on the railway platform, and now... Our little girl is going to Queen's College to learn to be a teacher and we did that, Marilla. We grew her up — beats growin' potatoes now, doesn't it?

ANNE comes running on in the dress.

ANNE *(starting to cry)* Oh, Matthew...

MATTHEW Why... why, Anne, don't you like it? Well now, well now...

ANNE Like it! Oh, Matthew! Matthew, it's perfectly exquisite. Oh, I can never thank you enough. Look at these sleeves! I'm so glad that puffed sleeves are still fashionable. It did seem to me that I'd never get over it if they went out before I had a dress with them.

MARILLA It's pretty enough all right, but I believe there's something missing.

MATTHEW What's missing?

MARILLA Well, it's nothing but foolishness but I do believe if you were to have a beautiful jewel pinned to your dress, you might look just like a Queen.

MARILLA removes her brooch and pins it on ANNE.

MARILLA There now.

Act Two, Scene Thirteen

Green Gables.

JOSIE, RUBY and DIANA stand around the piano singing My Love Is Like A Red, Red Rose. RACHEL directs them, joining in when she can no longer resist it. MARILLA sits knitting and enjoying the music. As the song goes on, MATTHEW enters the parlour and sits down in an armchair with a long sigh. He has the paper and eases back in the chair, but just sits listening. Then the older ANNE enters and joins in the singing.

THE GIRLS My love is like a red red rose
that's newly sprung in June
My love is like a melody
that's sweetly played in tune
As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
so deep in love am I
And I will love thee still my dear,
'til all the seas gang dry
'til all the seas gang dry, my dear
'til all the seas gang dry
And I will love thee still my dear,
'til all the seas gang dry

MARILLA begins to cry. ANNE stops.

ANNE Marilla, our song has made you cry. Now, I
call that a positive triumph.

MARILLA Fiddlesticks. I wasn't crying over some silly
song. It's nothing but my foolishness. I was
looking at you and thinking that the little girl
who came to stay has vanished somehow and
here is this tall, serious-eyed lady in her
place.

ANNE Marilla! I'm not a bit changed, not really. I'm only just pruned down and branched out.

MARILLA Maybe, but I just couldn't help thinking of the little girl you used to be, Anne. And I was wishing you could have stayed a little girl, even with all your queer ways. You've grown up now and you're going away and... and I just got lonesome thinking it all over.

ANNE It won't make a bit of difference where I go, I shall always be your little Anne who will love you and Matthew and dear Green Gables more and better every day of her life.

ANNE lays her cheek against MARILLA's and reaches out a hand to pat MATTHEW's shoulder.

MATTHEW Well now, I guess she ain't been much spoiled, is she, Marilla.

MARILLA No, I guess you putting your oar in occasionally never did much harm after all.

MATTHEW I reckon that's true.

He sighs and lies back in his chair.

ANNE You've been working too hard today, haven't you, Matthew? Why won't you take things easier?

MATTHEW Well now, I can't seem to.

MARILLA You're still driving yourself like a boy of twenty.

MATTHEW Well, I've always worked pretty hard.

MARILLA Yes, and you'll kill yourself with it yet.

MATTHEW Well now, I guess I'd rather drop in harness.

RACHEL Matthew Cuthbert.

ANNE If I had been the boy you sent for, I'd be able to help you so much now and spare you in a hundred ways. I could find it in my heart to wish I had been, just for that.

MATTHEW I'd rather have you than a dozen boys, Anne. Just mind you that. I guess it wasn't a boy that took the Avery scholarship, was it? It was a girl — my girl — my girl that I'm proud of. Now you girls sing some more. Even if it's just that one again.

THE GIRLS 'Til all the seas gang dry my dear
And the rocks melt with the sun
And I will love thee ever more
'Til the sands of life are run.

As they sing MATTHEW opens the paper and reads for a moment, then gasps and stands up, his face strangely drawn and gray. He drops the paper and staggers towards the door. The music fails.

MARILLA Matthew — Matthew — what is the matter?

MARILLA picks up the paper.

MARILLA The Abbey Bank has failed. Matthew...

He staggers off.

ANNE Matthew...

Offstage we hear a crash and a thud.

ANNE Marilla!

MARILLA rushes off after MATTHEW, followed by RACHEL.

MARILLA *(off, an anguished cry)* Matthew!

Hearing MARILLA's cry, ANNE rushes towards her, but is stopped by RACHEL who emerges looking very sad.

ANNE What's the matter?

RACHEL You can't do anything for him, Anne.

ANNE Mrs. Lynde, Matthew isn't...

RACHEL Yes, child, I've seen it so many times and...
Matthew is gone.

Scene shift. Girls and MARILLA exit softly singing Red Red Rose.

Act Two, Scene Fourteen

The Graveyard.

ANNE kneels beside MATTHEW's grave planting a rose cutting. MARILLA stands watching.

MARILLA He always liked those roses the best. Mother brought them out from Scotland. They were so small and sweet on their thorny stems.

ANNE It makes me feel glad to plant them here by his grave. I miss him so much — all the time — and yet, the world and life still seem very beautiful to me.

MARILLA Yes.

ANNE And today Diana said something funny and I found myself laughing. I thought when he died, I could never laugh again. I oughtn't to... it doesn't seem right.

MARILLA Matthew always liked to hear you laugh.

ANNE Oh, Marilla, I've had this horrible dull ache ever since he died, but... I can't cry. I can laugh, but I can't cry for him and he loved me so much.

MARILLA begins to sob uncontrollably.

ANNE rushes to her. They hold each other, both crying.

MARILLA There — there — don't cry so, dearie. It can't bring him back.

ANNE Oh, Marilla. The tears don't hurt me like the ache does.

MARILLA It— it — isn't right to cry so. And I wouldn't do it, but... He's always been such a good, kind brother to me. (*trying to pull away*) God knows best.

ANNE (*holding her tight*) Oh, Marilla, what will we do without him?

MARILLA We've got each other, Anne. I don't know what I'd do if you --if you'd never come. It's never been easy for me to say things out of my heart, but... I know I've been harsh with you but... you mustn't think I didn't love you as well as Matthew did. I love you as dear as if you were my own flesh and blood.

They hug and cry. Then MARILLA draws away.

ANNE Oh, Marilla. Are you very tired?

MARILLA Yes, no — I don't know. Dr. Stanley made me see the oculist a few days ago. He says that if I give up reading and sewing entirely and any kind of work that strains the eyes and wear the glasses he's given me, he thinks my eyes may not get any worse and my headaches will be cured. But if I don't, he says I'll certainly be stone blind in six months.

ANNE Blind!

MARILLA Anne, think of it.

ANNE No, Marilla, he has given you hope.

MARILLA Hope! What am I to live for if I can't read or sew or do anything like that? I might as well be blind — or dead.

ANNE Marilla!

MARILLA It's no good talking about it. I must sell Green Gables.

- ANNE Sell Green Gables?
- MARILLA If my eyes were strong I could stay here and look after things and manage, with a good hired man. But now things would only get worse and worse all the time, 'til nobody would want to buy it.
- ANNE You can't sell Green Gables. It's your home.
- MARILLA Use your head, girl. Every cent of our money went in that bank. It won't bring much as it's small and the buildings are old, but it'll be enough for me to live on. Rachel says I can board with her.
- ANNE No!
- MARILLA Oh, Anne, I can't stay here alone.
- ANNE You won't have to stay here alone, I'm not going to university.
- MARILLA Not going to university!
- ANNE I could never leave you alone in your trouble, after all you've done for me.
- MARILLA But Anne, all of your plans...
- ANNE I will make new plans. Mrs. Lynde told me last night they hadn't found anyone for the White Sands school. I'll apply. It won't be as nice or convenient as if I had the Avonlea school, but I can board home and drive myself over to White Sands and back.
- MARILLA Not in winter, child — the wind blows so fierce and the storms...
- ANNE Even in winter I can come home Fridays. We'll be real cozy together, and I'm heart glad over the very thought of staying at dear Green Gables. Nobody could love it as you and I do —

so we must keep it.

They hug again. Musical Bridge.

Act Two, Scene Fifteen

In Front of RACHEL's.

*JOSIE is walking by when RUBY and
DIANA come hurrying on.*

RUBY Josie, Josie, have you heard the news? It's all over town. Anne has given up her scholarship and applied for the school at White Sands!

JOSIE What?

DIANA She did it so she could take care of Marilla.

RUBY White Sands, isn't that romantic?

*RACHEL comes out of her place, having
overheard the conversation.*

RACHEL White Sands, fiddlesticks. Anne's going to teach right here in Avonlea.

JOSIE What?

RACHEL The trustees want to offer her the school.

JOSIE But... but I thought it was promised to Gilbert!

RACHEL It was, but as soon as I told Gilbert Anne had applied at White Sands, he withdrew his application. He said Anne must have Avonlea and he would go to White Sands.

RUBY Oh, Gilbert!

DIANA That is so kind and thoughtful of him, isn't it, Josie?

JOSIE Yes, it's wonderful.

JOSIE exits, passing GILBERT.

GILBERT Hello, Josie....

JOSIE Oh Gilbert, how could you!

ANNE enters from the other direction and walks purposefully towards GILBERT.

DIANA There's Anne.

RUBY Does she know?

RACHEL Why of course. I told Marilla as soon as I found out.

ANNE Mr. Blythe? I—

GILBERT Anne, I was on my way to see you. I wanted to tell you that I've decided to take the position at White Sands.

ANNE I... I know. Mrs. Lynde came by, fresh from the trustees' meeting and bursting with gossip.

GILBERT laughs.

GILBERT There will never be a secret in Avonlea as long as Rachel Lynde trods the planet.

ANNE pauses. She sees RUBY, RACHEL and DIANA all watching them. DIANA elbows RUBY. They look at RACHEL.

RACHEL Well ladies, can I offer you a drop of cordial?

They go into her house, but RACHEL lingers on until ANNE gives her a very pointed look. She then beams and goes inside.

ANNE Gilbert, I want to thank you for giving up the school for me. It was very good of you... but you can't...

GILBERT You can't prevent me.

ANNE But, I don't think I ought to let you make such a sacrifice for... for me

GILBERT I've already signed papers with the White Sands trustees. So, it wouldn't do me any good now if you were to refuse Avonlea. So this once, at least, I win. *(he laughs)*

ANNE *(laughs too)* Oh Gilbert, how can I thank you for giving up the school for me? It was very good of you... and I appreciate it.

ANNE shakes his hand and he holds on to it.

GILBERT But, I do have something to ask in return.

ANNE What?

GILBERT Forgive me my old fault.

ANNE I forgave you that day you saved me, although I didn't know it. I've been — I may as well make a complete confession — I've been sorry ever since.

GILBERT Are we going to be friends after this then?

ANNE I'm not sure if I could get used to the idea. We haven't been good friends but we've been very good enemies.

He laughs and lets go of her hand.

ANNE Gilbert, do you think we can change something, anything for the better?

GILBERT I know we can.

ANNE It's just that... my future seemed to stretch out before me like a straight road. Now there is a bend in it. I don't know what lies around the bend.

GILBERT The best, for both of us... and I believe we can help each other. We're going to be good teachers, Anne, and good teachers are worth their weight in gold.

ANNE Gilbert, you're a kindred spirit!

GILBERT "Would that I was, my Lady Elaine."

ANNE I think we are going to be the best of friends.

ANNE takes his hand and smiles.

ANNE God's in his heaven, all's right with the world.

The End.

[illegible]

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Anne

by Paul Ledoux

adapted from the novel *Anne of Green Gables*
by L. M. Montgomery

They wanted a young boy from the orphanage to help out around the farm. Instead, Matthew and Marilla got the irrepressible Anne Shirley. Their lives and the community of Avonlea would never be the same again.

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